

45 NEW WATCHES FROM THE GENEVA FAIRS

WatchTime

THE MAGAZINE OF FINE WATCHES

WATCH TEST

Breitling Chronomat
BR01 vs. IWC Big
Ingenieur Chrono

ANTIQUES ROADSHOW

Watch Expert
Charles Tearle

BELL & ROSS

The Men Behind
The Brand

TEST

GLASHÜTTE ORIGINAL

April 2010

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SENATOR
CHRONOMETER

$$\exp(M_{42 \times 42}) = \left| \lim \sum \frac{1}{k!} M_{42 \times 42}^k \right| < \infty$$

16.7mm

300g

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} H^0(Z_M) \rightarrow \\ \downarrow s_1 \\ H^0(Z_{M/3}) \rightarrow \end{array} \right\}$$

$$\left| 1 + M_{42 \times 42} + \frac{1}{2} M_{42 \times 42}^2 + \frac{1}{6} M_{42 \times 42}^3 + \frac{1}{24} M_{42 \times 42}^4 + \dots \right| < \infty$$

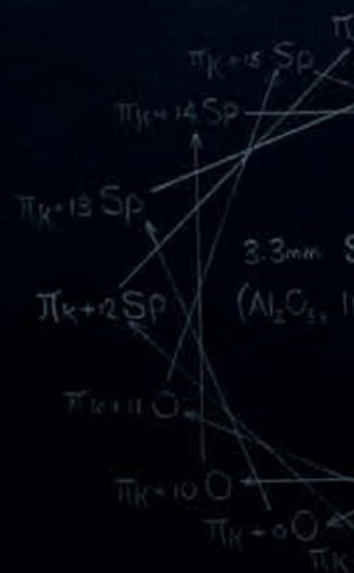
$$\pi_1[13 \text{ layers} + 7 \text{ screws}]$$

$$H' [13 \text{ layers} + 7 \text{ screws}] = H' \left[\bigcup_{\ell=1}^7 \{z=\ell\} \cup \bigcup_{s=1}^7 \{x=y=s\} \subset \mathbb{R}^2 \right]$$

$$\left[\bigcup_{s=1}^7 \{ (t,s \sin t) \mid \pi \leq t \leq 13 \} \subset \mathbb{R}^2 \right]$$

CONCORD

$$\bigvee_{j=1}^{(13-1)(7-1)} s^i = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } i \geq 2 \\ \mathbb{Z}^{72} & \text{if } i = 1 \\ \mathbb{Z} & \text{if } i = 0 \end{cases}$$





C1



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SIHH Show Surprises

I experienced every magazine editor's nightmare at the SIHH show in Geneva in January. We had put about half the magazine to bed before our editorial gang of four took off for Geneva. On the show's opening day, senior editor Norma Buchanan and I were talking to the CEO of Van Cleef & Arpels, Stanislas de Quercize, and acclaimed watchmaker Jean-Marc Weiderrecht, head of Agenhor SA, who makes mechanisms for Van Cleef. In the course of the conversation, Weiderrecht mentioned that BNB Concept, one of Switzerland's most famous movement producers, had gone out of business that morning.

Say what?! The demise of a watch company is always sad, but in this case I was particularly chagrined. Why? Because we had just wrapped up a feature article on BNB for this issue. It was ready to go to print. Long lead times are the bane of monthly and bi-monthly magazines. When the article was written, BNB was dealing with the bitter recession, as was the entire Swiss watch industry, but it was very much in business.

We quickly shifted gears. I asked managing editor Mark Bernardo, who was at the show, to alert our production team in Munich to kill the piece, and asked Buchanan to get working on an entirely new article. The BNB story continued to unfold right up to our final deadline. It was once again ready for print when we received new information from Hublot CEO Jean-Claude Biver. Biver was in the process of hiring around 35 of the watchmakers who worked at BNB and is planning to revive the brand that BNB launched, Confrérie Horlogère, as Confrérie Hublot. Buchanan revised the story once again. Her article, "R.I.P.: BNB" begins on page 46.

Following the BNB story is a 24-page section on the Geneva shows, including the new Gene-

va Time Exhibition, written by Buchanan, Bernardo and myself. It includes a report on the surprisingly upbeat mood at SIHH and 19 pages of new watches. In addition, online editor Mike Disher has posted plenty of show news at www.watchtime.com.

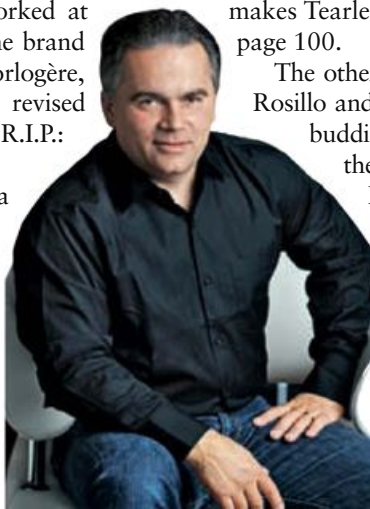
Our cover story details the impressive performance turned in by Glashütte Original's Senator Chronometer, which is the first GO watch to earn an official rate certificate from the Glashütte Observatory. "Freshman Senator" begins on page 90.

Another test feature presents a rare face-off between two in-house chronograph movements, one from Breitling, the other from IWC Schaffhausen. Breitling's Chronomat B01 is the first Breitling watch containing the firm's long-anticipated in-house movement, Caliber B01. IWC's piece is the Big Ingenieur Chronograph, which uses Caliber 89360. Our comparative test, "Heaven and Earth," begins on page 118.

This issue also features stories about three gentlemen who fell in love with watches when they were kids and went on to make careers in the watch biz. One of them will be a familiar face to fans of PBS's TV program, "Antiques Roadshow." He's Charles Tearle, vintage watch specialist with Antiquorum Auctioneers, who makes regular appearances as an expert on "Antiques Roadshow." Bernardo caught up with the often-on-the-go Brit at Antiquorum's New York office. Find out what makes Tearle tick in "Man of Auction" on page 100.

The other two watch lovers are Carlos Rosillo and Bruno Belamich, high-school buddies, who teamed up to create the Bell & Ross brand. We detail Bruno and Carlos's excellent adventures in "Building Bell & Ross" on page 110.

Now with Hublot: BNB Concept founder Mathias Buttet



Joe Thompson
Editor-in-Chief




Breguet
Depuis 1775

**“They were both indeed
Breguet watches,
wonderfully accurate,
wonderfully resistant (...).”**

**Patrick O’Brian,
“Blue at the Mizzen”, 1999**



Marine Tourbillon with escapement in silicon - Breguet, the creator of the Tourbillon

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Antiquorum or appraising them on TV for “Antiques Roadshow,” Charles Tearle lives and breathes vintage watches.

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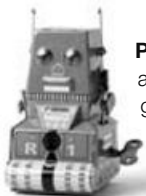
ON THE COVER: Glashütte Original’s Senator Chronometer. Photo by Nik Schölzel

This watch runs as long as you do. Plus seven days.



IWC
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SINCE 1868

Don't give up.



Portuguese Automatic. Ref. 5001: Twist your wrist and the world's largest automatic movement from IWC is set in motion. Glance through the sapphire glass back cover to see how in no time, the automatic Pellaton winding system builds up a power reserve of seven days. As indicated by the power reserve display. A mechanical lever stops the watch if you don't wear it for 168 hours. But why ever would you do that? **IWC. Engineered for men.**

Mechanical IWC-manufactured movement | Automatic Pellaton winding system (figure) | Seven days' continuous running | Power reserve display | Date display | Rotor with 18 ct. yellow gold medallion | Antireflective sapphire glass | Sapphire glass back cover | Water-resistant 3 bar | Stainless steel



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17th of September 1755. In the offices of the solicitor Mr. Choisy, a young Master Watchmaker from Geneva named Jean-Marc Vacheron is about to hire his first apprentice. This agreement is the first known reference to the founding watchmaker of a prestigious dynasty and it represents the establishment of Vacheron Constantin, the oldest watchmaking manufacturer in the world in continuous operation.

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Zenith's El
Primero
movement



Who said "Less is more"?

"THE WRITER'S ARGUMENT THAT A ZENITH WITH AN EL PRIMERO MOVEMENT IS PRICED 'SIGNIFICANTLY MORE' THAN THE TAG HEUER CALIPER CHRONOGRAPH IS JUST NOT TRUE."

DEFENDING ZENITH

In the test article on the TAG Heuer Grand Carrera Calibre 36 RS Caliper Chronograph (that's a lot of name!), near the end the writer comments that "Zenith watches with the El Primero caliber cost significantly more" when referencing TAG's \$7,900 price tag. My research into Zenith watches shows that, as an example, the 40-mm Class El Primero Moonphase, which includes chronograph, calendar, and moon-phase complications, has a MSRP of only about \$500 more. I can find other examples. Some might say as a counterpoint that the Zenith I reference is not a split-seconds chronograph. Yet it's the same high-beat base movement and has 1/5-second indices on the dial, so I'm guessing you could fake it pretty well. The writer's argument that a Zenith with an El Primero is "significantly more" is just not true.

Ryan Weyeneth
Phoenix, AZ

WRIGHT IS WRONG

In the article about the Movado SE Extreme ("Museum Megastar") in the February issue, a quote caught my eye that didn't seem to be attributed correctly. A quick Google search confirmed my suspicion. "Less is more" is one of the basic tenets of the Bauhaus movement and was coined by Mies van der Rohe, not Frank Lloyd Wright, as the article states. Being a registered architect, I would like to set the record straight about this minor factual error. I am not familiar with the quote, "But nothing is not enough," attributed to van der Rohe in the article. Googling sheds no light as to who coined that phrase. It sounds like something Robert Venturi would say; however, his famous quote is "Less is a bore."

Steve Cseplo
Duluth, GA

NAME THAT BATHYSCAPHE

Regarding the article "Capturing the Jaws Watch" by Gary and Christian Stock in the February issue, the research submarine that de-

scended into the Marianas Trench was named the Trieste, not the Bathyscaphe. Bathyscaphe was merely a name chosen to indicate the kind of diving vessel that the Trieste was.

Howard Brownstein
Tucson, AZ

Gary Stock replies: We did not use the vessel name but rather its categorical designation for the simple reason that Trieste would not have illuminated the trade name Nautoscaph nor have any historical meaning for readers. Maybe we should have said "a" rather than "the" bathyscaphe. There have been two bathyscaphes built in human history — the FNRS-2 and its successor, the Trieste, which was refitted as Trieste 2 — so the likelihood of any confusion is minimal.

TORTUOUS HISTORY

I particularly enjoyed Norma Buchanan's article about Seiko and the tortuous history ("Deconstructing Seiko" February 2010) that has led to its position today. One wonders what effect a smoother passage would have had on its products. It almost appears as if the companies existed in isolation from the market. I bought the first quartz Seiko I ever saw, back in the early '70s in Newport Beach. I've had several other Seikos in intervening years, culminating with the Grand Seiko Spring Drive GMT I'm wearing today.

F. B. Oldham
St. Louis, MO

WHY PLASTIC?

Thank you for Jens Koch's great article and the supporting articles about the Omega Speedmaster in the December 2009 issue. Putting all that material in one place was an excellent way to discuss such a passionate subject among watch buffs. Personally, I most enjoyed the interview with Mr. Ragan. Nothing better than getting the details "right from the horse's mouth"! I did find something surprising on page 123: "...and functional considerations dictated that the brake lever for the chronograph runner be made of plastic." Would it be

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“ALL THE TALK OF HAND-MADE MOVEMENTS IS IRONIC AS ACTUAL PRODUCTION AT SWISS FIRMS IS AT ITS MOST INDUSTRIALIZED EVER.”

possible to expand on what those functional considerations are? I was not aware that movements of fine watches contained plastic parts.

Gino Fortunato
Via e-mail

Jens Koch replies: The plastic brake lever is softer than the brass chronograph runner so there is no possibility of damaging the teeth of the runner. There are chronograph movements in which the brake lever is made out of metal and these also work. But they are more complicated and therefore more expensive to produce. Functionally, they are not as good as the plastic lever.

THE GUILLOCHÉ MACHINE

I appreciated the photos of the rose engine and its work in the article on Ralph Lauren (“The Guilloché Machine,” February 2010). Those are the best photos of a very rare machine and of the wonderful results that can be achieved in the most skilled hands. I have a few watches finished on a rose engine, including a special watch from Jochen Benziger of Pforzheim, Germany. They are among my most treasured watches. It is great to see that skill appreciated in this world of “good enough” and “nearly correct.”

Alec Dawson
Cranston, RI

I just finished reading your article on rose engines and guilloché work in the February issue. I am a member of both the OTI (Ornamental Turners International) and the SOT (Society of Ornamental Turners) and am expecting delivery of my new rose engine mid-March from Fred Armbruster. He is quite an authority on rose engines and straight line engines and is just completing a batch of 26 Armbruster MKII lathes. These lathes are based on the best rose engine of all time, the Holtzapffel rose engine, but he has incorporated the best of modern technology (bearings, an industry standard 5C toolholding nose, etc.) while keeping the beauty of the original. Hope this is of interest to you.

Jeff McDowell
Via e-mail

It is indeed. I am delighted to learn that these magnificent machine are still being made by Dr. Armbruster at his machine shop, Ornamental Turning Works, Inc., in York, Maine.

JT

DOUBLE OR NOTHING

A letter to the editor (“Perfect Explanation”) in the February 2010 issue regarding the use of perfect numbers for the date in watch advertisement photos was fascinating. I mentioned this phenomenon to my wife, a math teacher. She pointed out an error in the writer’s calculation in arriving at a “perfect number” which, according to the writer, is a number in which the sum of its divisors equals the number. However, it actually yields double the number. The reason? Missing from the writer’s equation is the number itself, which itself is a divisor. For example, take the number 6. In the letter, the writer purports its divisors to be limited to 1, 2, and 3. But what about 6? Presumably, if 1 is a divisor of 6 (it goes into 6 six times), then 6 is also a divisor (it goes into 6 one time).

Add them all up and you get 12. Accordingly, a perfect number would have to be defined as a number in which the sum of its divisors except itself equals the number. Otherwise, the sum will be double the number.

Peter A. Mandler
Smithtown, NY

TOO EASY MONEY

There has been a lot of ink spilled recently on how the downturn has hurt the Swiss watchmaking industry. I say it is about time, because nothing can possibly justify a \$25,000 price tag for a three-handed watch, even from Patek Philippe. Gold is at an all-time high per-ounce price, though rarely more than two ounces are used to make a gold watch case. And all the talk of hand-made movements is ironic, as the actual production at all those Swiss firms is at its most industrialized ever, with CNC mills, spark-erosion and laser-cutting machines making the production of components cheaper than ever before! Only the finish and final assembly remain “hand-made” and only at top firms.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26



PANERAI
LABORATORIO DI IDEE.



Were Seiko factories too isolated?



Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11: plastic parts?

WatchTime welcomes correspondence from readers. Send comments to editor-in-chief Joe Thompson at 274 Madison Avenue, Suite 705, New York, NY 10016 or via e-mail to jthompson@watchtime.com. Please include your full name, city and state, and country (if outside the United States). Letters may be edited for length or clarity. Due to the volume of correspondence, *WatchTime* cannot acknowledge all the letters it receives. However, each one is read in full.

“PULLING THE CROWN OR ‘HACKING’ PROVIDES LITTLE IN TERMS OF BATTERY CONSERVATION. IT ONLY STOPS THE MOVEMENT AND DOES NOT CUT BATTERY POWER TO THE QUARTZ OSCILLATOR.”

One might rightly ask what accounts for the two-fold increase in watch prices that occurred within the last couple of years? Well, the engorged profit margins, of course! No wonder that a number of new and resurrected brands proliferated as numerous investors took notice of the ballooning profits and flocked to the sweet smell of easy money.

When stock-exchange traders and businessmen had their own “easy money” to part with, they thus supported the ever-inflating watch prices, and the Swiss watchmaking industry developed a voracious appetite to charge ever more. Watchmakers, who in their menial handiwork were previously akin to car mechanics and farmers, became millionaires, earning more than any other type of engineer!

The downturn hurt the consumers. However, there is no downturn in the watchmaking industry, there is a correction, as it previously was with housing prices. The difference is that correction is directed toward the consumer. It is a normalization of previously inflated prices.

Yory Teperman
New York, NY

SMILEY FACE

Why 10:10? To better show the functions of the face: day-date, subdials, brand name and other info. Good marketing? Or just a nice smile?

Donald Robert Wood
Deer Lodge, MT

TAPPING THE WATCH

In response to Stuart in Chicago regarding tapping his watch to get it started (“Question Time,” Last Minute, February 2010). Mr. Stuart has watches that we watchmakers call perfectly in beat, meaning that when a watch is completely unwound, the roller jewel, pallet fork and escape wheel should be on a perfect line of center. The balance wheel receives its impulse from the pallet fork. Therefore, when you wind the watch up, a slight motion is needed to move the balance wheel any direction to receive the impulse from the pallet fork. I would suggest

that he rotate the watch back and forth instead of tapping it. Perfectly in beat is a good thing.

David Sweigart, CMW21
Via e-mail

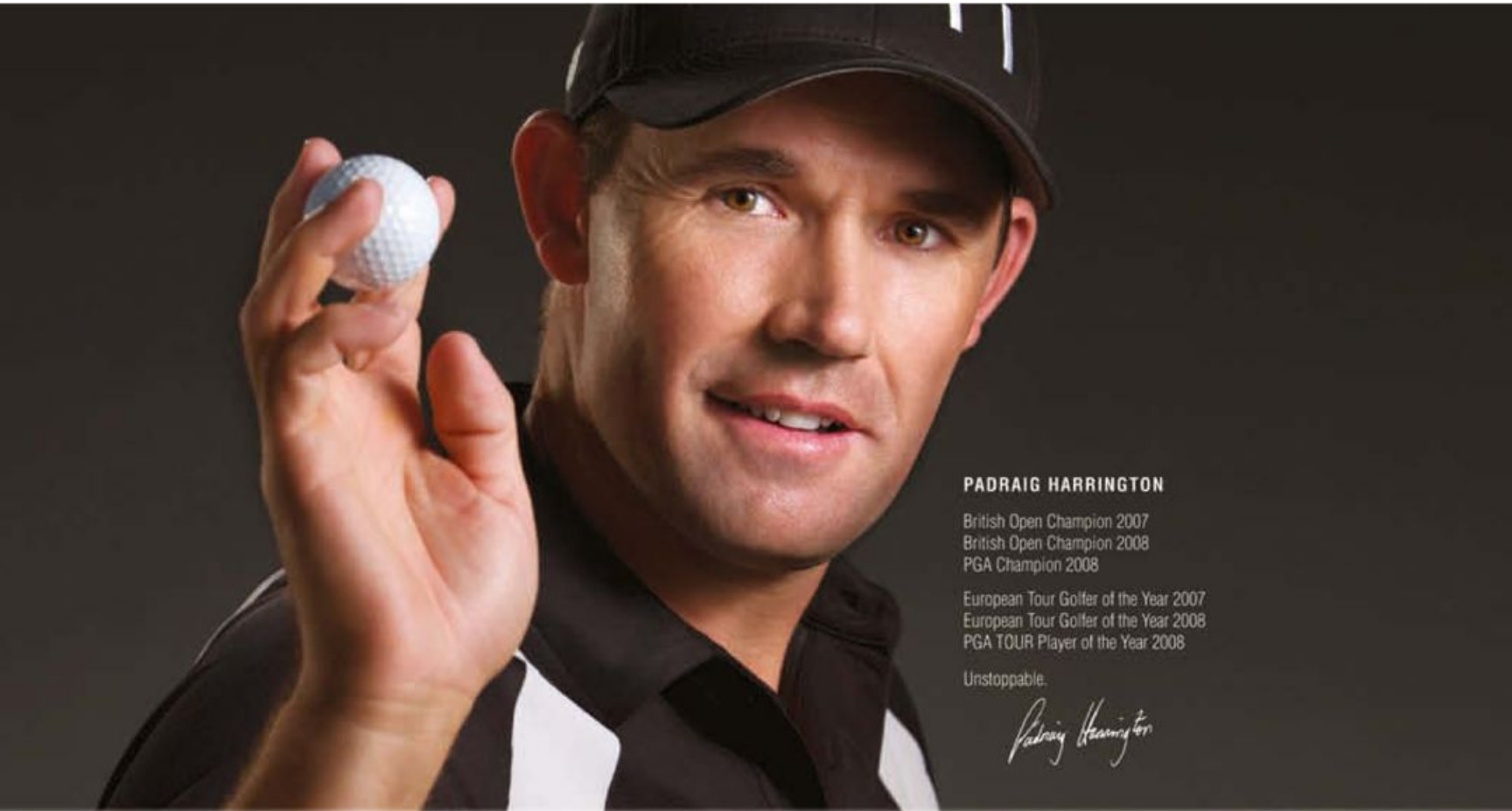
Regarding Stuart in Chicago, firstly, he is wise not to use a watch winder except for his complicated automatics. The watch (automatic or manual) will not start for a couple of reasons: 1) The escapement, primarily the pallet stones, must have a fresh lubricant placed perfectly where it belongs. As the oils age, they can get sticky. Keeping the watch running on a winder only compounds the problem. 2) Also, the beat error (the difference between the tick and the tock) might be putting pressure on the one stone or the other and not allowing the watch to start because the stones need to “slide” on the escape wheel teeth before the watch will run. Both of these conditions should be corrected in every good complete movement service.

Jon W. Horton, CMW21
Via e-mail

BAD IDEA

Referencing your “Question Time” article in February 2010, allow me to address the issue of pulling the crown, or “hacking,” analog quartz watches while in storage. This question has come up quite a few times on Watchgeeks.net, a watch forum with more than 17,000 members. As an owner of Watchgeeks.net, I have personally contacted manufacturers and a few qualified watchmakers about this issue. Here is the consensus of opinion: Pulling the crown or “hacking” provides little in terms of battery conservation. Disengaging the crown only stops the movement and does not cut battery power to the quartz oscillator. Battery savings is less than 25 percent. Additionally, the stem is now open, exposing the movement to variations in atmospheric moisture, pressure and micro-dust. All I spoke with agreed that this is a bad idea.

Bruce Nathan
Saegertown, PA



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PGA Champion 2008

European Tour Golfer of the Year 2007
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2009: Switzerland's Annus Horribilis

Swiss watch exports fell 22.3 percent last year. But a year-end sales surge in some markets signaled that the worst is over.

How bad was it? No surprise to anyone, but the U.S. market for Swiss watches was terrible in recession-wracked 2009. The Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry (FH) says that exports of Swiss watches to the United States fell 37.9 percent by value last year, more than in any other of Switzerland's top 10 markets. Of those markets, only Japan, which showed a decline of 33.5 percent, and the United Arab Emirates, which fell 34.9 percent, even came close to matching the U.S. decrease. The value of Swiss watch exports to the U.S. fell to SF1.47 billion (\$1.44 billion). The last time Swiss exports to the U.S. were so low was 1998.

Total exports of Swiss watches were down 22.3 percent for the year, to 13.23 billion Swiss francs (\$12.97 billion). This figure includes finished watches, clocks and components. Exports of finished watches alone also fell by 22.3 percent, to SF12.3 billion (\$12.05 billion). The number of watches exported declined by 17.0 percent to 21.7 million. According to the FH, "the value of Swiss watch exports began the year 2009 with very marked rates of decline which held steady at between -20% and -33% until October."

But sales improved as the year wound down. For December, Swiss watch exports to all markets fell just 7.2 percent. To the United States, they were down a "mere" 15.7 percent. This was much less than in some other major markets such as France, where they fell 24.8 percent for the month; Japan, where they were down 28 percent; or Italy, where they dropped 33.6 percent.

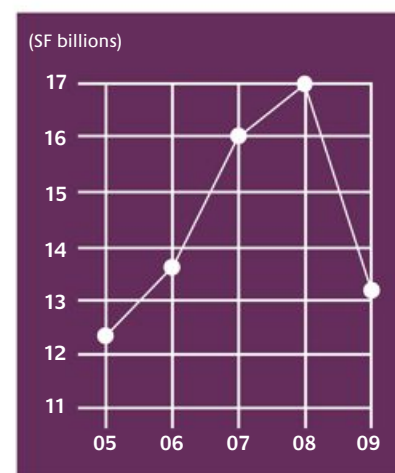
These countries were in sharp contrast to China and to Switzerland's largest watch market, Hong Kong (it's so big because it serves as a distribution point for many Asian countries and is a huge shopping destination for Chinese mainland

consumers). While Swiss exports to both markets were down for the year (by 15.2 percent and 19.7 percent, respectively), they rallied big time in December, growing 43.5 percent and 27 percent, respectively. China's binge buying pushed the country into the fourth spot among Switzerland's top markets in December, behind Hong Kong, the United States and France. For the year as a whole, China ranked seventh. Hong Kong and China together bought 21.6 percent of Swiss watches in 2009.

Worldwide, watches with export prices of more than SF500 fared worse during the year than less-expensive ones, declining 23.7 percent by value and 25.7 percent in units. Watches with export prices between SF200 and SF500 performed the best of all price segments, falling 4.7 percent by value and 3.9 percent in units. Exports of watches costing less than SF200 fell by 17 percent in both value and volume.

Last year's sales at the **Swatch Group**, the biggest Swiss watch company, followed a pattern similar to that shown in the FH figures, with business showing a marked improvement in the second half of the year. The company reported that its

Swiss Watch Exports, Global



sales of finished watches and jewelry for July through December grew almost 5 percent, at constant exchange rates, over the same period of 2008. Swatch Group sales in December were the highest of any December in the company's history. Sales to this country, however, did not keep up the pace. "Countries such as Japan, the U.S. and Spain continued to suffer from the difficult economic conditions," the Swatch Group said in its financial-results press release.

Thanks to the strong second half, the company posted a decline for the year in its watch and jewelry sales, at constant exchange rates, of just 5.5 percent (including the effects of currency fluctuations, the decline was 7.7 percent). That was much better than the result reported by the FH for the whole Swiss watch industry, the Swatch Group pointed out.

For the year, Swatch Group gross sales of watches and jewelry were SF4.43 billion (\$4.34 billion). Total company sales, which also include movements, electronic systems and other items, declined 6.3 percent at constant exchange

Top 10 Swiss Watch Markets, 2009

	Swiss francs (millions)	% change from '08
1. Hong Kong	2,168	-19.7
2. United States	1,470	-37.9
3. France	969	-14.4
4. Italy	900	-13.9
5. Germany	794	-13.0
6. Japan	768	-33.5
7. China	700	-15.2
8. Singapore	674	-13.9
9. United Kingdom	544	-15.1
10. U.A. Emirates	438	-34.9

Source: Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry

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rates, to SF5.42 billion (\$5.31 billion). The figure excludes the 2008 divestments of two car-components companies, Sokymat and Michel. The company said 2009 gross sales were the third-highest it had ever posted.

As of *WatchTime*'s early February deadline, the Swatch Group had not yet reported profit for the year, but did say it expected second-half margins and net income, like sales, to be better than in the first half.

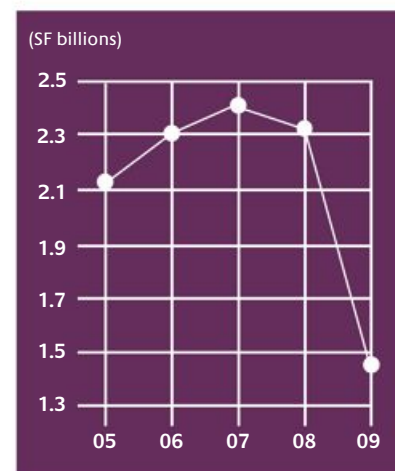
In the company's production segment, which includes sales of movements to other watch companies and to Swatch Group brands, gross sales for the year declined 17.6 percent at constant exchange rates, to SF1.49 billion (\$1.46 billion). One reason was that orders from other companies for mechanical movements to be cased this year decreased sharply. "This trend will soon change in light of the improving market situation," the company said.

Watch sales at the **Richemont Group** also showed improvement as the year ended. In the company's "specialist watchmaker" segment, consisting of 10 luxury brands including Vacheron Constantin, Jaeger-LeCoultre, IWC Schaffhausen, and Piaget, sales for the last three months of 2009 grew 9 percent at con-

stant exchange rates, to 417 million euros (\$592 million). By comparison, this segment's sales for the nine months ended Dec. 31 declined 12 percent (Richemont's fiscal year ends March 31). October-through-December sales by Richemont's jewelry brands, which include sales of both jewelry and watches by the company's flagship brand Cartier, grew 10 percent, to €837 million (\$1.19 billion). Richemont Group sales to the Americas during the quarter grew 8 percent at constant exchange rates but decreased 2 percent at actual rates. Sales to the Asia-Pacific region, excluding Japan, grew by 34 percent at constant rates, reflecting the late-2009 consumption boom in China.

Like Swatch and Richemont, **LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton** also saw its sales improve late in the year. This limited the fall in the company's watch and jewelry revenue for the year to 13 percent at constant exchange rates. Sales from the watch and jewelry business's recurring operations were €764 million (\$1.08 billion) and profits, which dropped 47 percent, were €63 million (\$89.5 million). The company's watch-only brands include TAG Heuer, Hublot and Zenith. The biggest of them, TAG Heuer, strengthened its position in all of its key markets, LVMH said. *NORMA BUCHANAN*

Swiss Watch Exports to USA



Source: Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry

*HOW BAD WAS IT?
THE LAST TIME
SWISS WATCH
EXPORTS TO THE
UNITED STATES
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WAS 1998.*

On Our Web Site

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- **Baselworld Previews** By Mike Disher. See pre-show sneak peeks at watches about to be unveiled at Baselworld.
- **Beyond Tiger: Watches, Celebs and Scandal** By Mark Bernardo. Tiger Woods is just the latest in a series of "ambassadors" who have embarrassed the brands they endorse. See what other watch endorsers got into hot water.
- **Trivia Test: Famous Firsts** By Norma Buchanan. Can you answer our quiz about a dozen watch firsts?
- **The Man Behind the Brand** By Joe Thompson. Just who was Daniel JeanRichard, anyway?

What does the name "Mare Nostrum," used on a series of Panerai watches, mean?

It's Latin for "our sea," i.e., the Mediterranean. The ancient Romans used the term because their empire surrounded the entire Mediterranean. Benito Mussolini resurrected the name because he sought to form a new Italian empire as extensive as ancient Rome had been.



A new Mare Nostrum model from Panerai

1860 ————— 1916 ————— 1969 ————— 2010 —————



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The bamboo and sparrow model



The art of maki-e



Maki-e Masterpieces

East meets West in the three latest additions to Vacheron Constantin's Métiers d'Art series of limited-edition watches. They all have dials and backs adorned with lacquer paintings by one of Japan's oldest lacquer companies, Zôhiko, which was founded in Kyoto in 1661.

The technique used to paint the pictures is known as maki-e, which in Japanese means "sprinkled picture." It consists of sprinkling gold or silver dust over lacquer while the lacquer is still wet. Maki-e was invented very early in Japan's history and became a mature art form after the eighth century. It has been in use ever since. The Zôhiko company has practiced maki-e for centuries and in the 19th century one of its owners was granted the title "Master of maki-e" by the emperor of Japan.

Each of the watches has on its dial a maki-e painting of one of three types of tree: the pine, bamboo or plum. The Japanese call these trees the "three friends of winter" because they can endure cold and storms. Because of their durability, they are symbols of longevity. Each watch also carries on its back a painting of one of three types of birds: on the pine watch, the crane; on the bamboo watch, the sparrow; and on the plum

watch, the nightingale. To the Japanese, the birds are also symbols of desirable traits or states of mind. The crane and sparrow both symbolize loyalty (the crane is also associated with long life) and the nightingale, because it sings in the springtime, a sense of renewal.

The three watches will be sold in sets; there will be 20 of them. Vacheron will launch a new set of three watches next year and a third in 2012. Each will be decorated with lacquer paintings by Zôhiko. The name of the entire collection is "La symbolique des laques." The collaboration between the two companies is similar to the one behind the most recent Métiers d'Art watch sets, in which Vacheron Constantin used miniature replicas of ceremonial masks from Geneva's Barbier-Mueller Museum.

The watches contain a special version of Vacheron's ultra-thin Caliber 1003 that is made of 14k white gold and skeletonized. The gold has been treated with ruthenium to make it less shiny and more elegant looking. (For more on Caliber 1003, see page 64.) The watches, which are 40 mm in diameter, have sapphire windows on the front and back. Cases come in rose or white gold. Price for the set of three: \$240,000.

Vacheron Constantin's plum tree and nightingale watch



Front and back of the pine tree and crane watch



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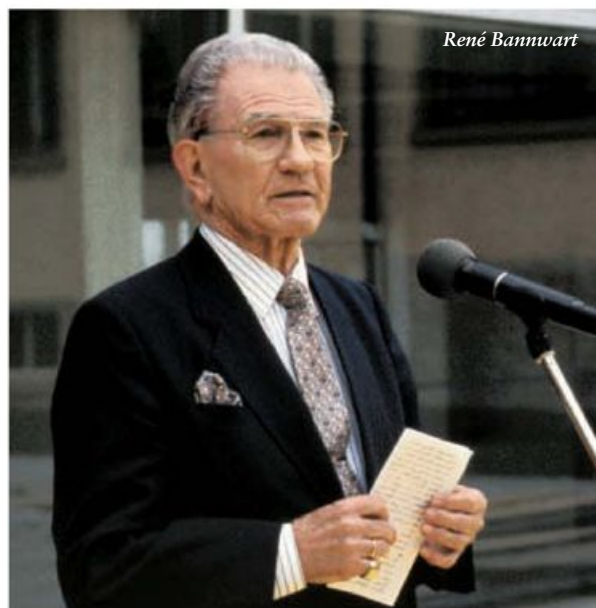
Corum Founder Dies

René Bannwart, founder, with his uncle, Gaston Ries, of the Swiss watch company Corum, died on January 13 in La Chaux-de-Fonds. He was 94.

Bannwart and Ries started the company, based in La Chaux-de-Fonds, in 1955. Five years later it introduced the Admiral's Cup watch, one of the brand's best-known models, which is still in production. (The original Admiral's Cup was rectangular; the round version with 12-sided bezel on the market today did not come out until 1983.) Another well-known Corum model, the Coin Watch, which featured an ultra-flat movement set in a \$20 Double Eagle Coin, came out in 1964. The Golden Bridge model, yet another famous Corum watch, was introduced in 1980.

Bannwart was born March 16, 1915, in Zurich, and spent his childhood in Basel. He studied business in Geneva and worked for Patek Philippe, starting in 1933, and Omega, from 1940 until he founded Corum. His new company's first success was a model called the Sans Heures, launched in 1958. It was so named because it had no hour markers.

In 2000, the Bannwart family sold Corum to Severin Wunderman, who died in 2008.



René Bannwart

Springtime for Breguet

Breguet has taken another step with silicon, introducing its first silicon balance spring equipped with a Breguet overcoil, i.e., a terminal curve that lifts the end of the spring above the plane of the rest of the spring and improves the balance's isochronism. The company introduced its first flat silicon balance spring, paired with a silicon escape wheel, in 2006.

The new spring is incorporated into a platinum version of the company's Tradition Fusee Tourbillon, Ref. 7047, which

was introduced in a standard-balance-spring version at Baselworld in 2007. The company says it will be using the new, Breguet-overcoil silicon spring in all its movements. Silicon has several advantages over metal as a material for balance springs, Breguet believes. One is that the process used to make them can yield a broad variety of shapes so the springs can be precisely adapted to a particular watch model. Furthermore, the company says, silicon balance springs are lighter than metal ones and less prone to deformation caused by gravity. They are also less vulnerable to shocks and more resistant to corrosion, Breguet says.


The silicon balance spring is just one of the watch's unusual features. As its name implies, the watch also has a tourbillon and a fusee. The latter, invented nearly 600 years ago and all but unheard of in modern watches, is a device designed to even out the barrel's power supply as the mainspring unwinds, and hence minimize timing errors caused by a reduction in mainspring torque.



What is "honey" gold?

A new gold alloy introduced by A. Lange & Söhne that is a mix of 18k white gold with copper, zinc and silicon. It is harder than standard 18k gold and has a very pale yellow color. Lange uses it in its new 1815 Moonphase watch.





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What Swiss-sounding brand is actually headquartered in Germany?



Made in Germany

How much do you know about that other luxury-watch manufacturing center?

1. Which of the following brands is *not* German?

- A. Milus
- B. Nomos
- C. Limes
- D. Nivrel

2. The term “Nuremberg eggs” refers to:

- A. Clumsy-looking, often low-quality watches made during the Weimar Republic
- B. A pattern used to decorate many early watches made in and around Nuremberg
- C. Ovoid German watches made in the 16th century
- D. Ovoid cams used in many German chronographs

3. What Swiss-sounding brand is actually headquartered in Germany?

- A. Swiss Army
- B. Chronoswiss
- C. Wyler Genève
- D. Alpina

4. Peter Henlein was:

- A. A locksmith from Nuremberg once believed to have made the world’s first watch
- B. The silent partner of Erhard Junghans, founder of the German watch company Junghans
- C. The founder of the German watch company Tutima
- D. The Munich-born inventor of Glucydur

5. One difference between the new German chronometer-certifying lab in Glashütte, Germany and the Swiss chronometer testing agency COSC is:

- A. COSC has tighter standards in its timing tests.

B. The German lab tests watches for one week longer than COSC.

- C. COSC tests watches at different humidity levels; the German lab at just one.
- D. COSC tests uncased movements; the German lab cased ones.

6. Which large luxury-goods group(s) owns a German watch company?

- A. LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton
- B. Richemont
- C. PPR
- D. A and B

7. What was the Mega 1?

- A. The world’s first motion-powered watch, made by Junghans
- B. The world’s first radio-controlled watch, made by Junghans
- C. The first model that the new A. Lange & Söhne company launched after it was founded in 1990
- D. A quartz watch manufactured by the tens of millions in Communist East Germany

8. What famous artist designed watches for Junghans?

- A. Max Bill
- B. Max Ernst
- C. Max Beckmann
- D. Peter Max

9. The German watchmaker Alfred Helwig invented:

- A. The screwed balance
- B. The swan’s neck adjustment device
- C. The flying tourbillon
- D. The split-seconds chronograph

10. Which of the following German watch companies was (were) expropriated by the Communists after World War II?

- A. A. Lange & Söhne
- B. Tutima
- C. Mühle
- D. A and C

11. What is German silver?

- A. Silver mined in the Ore Mountains of Saxony
- B. Pure silver
- C. An alloy of copper, nickel and, most often, zinc
- D. A silver alloy plated with 22-karat gold

12. Who is considered to be the founding father of the Glashütte watchmaking industry?

- A. Walter Lange
- B. Ferdinand A. Lange
- C. Carl Moritz Grossmann
- D. Julius Assmann

13. What does the notation I/SA, found on many German watches, mean?

- A. In Sachsen
- B. In Schwabische Alb
- C. In Sassnitz
- D. In Salzgitter

14. Which brand did *not* originate in Glashütte, Germany?

- A. Mühle
- B. Tutima
- C. A. Lange & Söhne
- D. Hanhart

Answers: 1A; 2C; 3B; 4A; 5D; 6B; 7B; 8A; 9C; 10D; 11C; 12B; 13A; 14D

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A New Jaguar

on the Prowl

The British luxury brand stakes out its territory with the 2010 XF



The 2010 Jaguar XF

Rumors of Jaguar's extinction are false. The iconic British automotive brand is back and better than ever with the new 2010 Jaguar XF — not a docile, demure pussycat but a true Jaguar that honors the brand's 75 years but also looks to the future.

It is also minus the few “hairballs” associated with Jaguar's vehicles when it was owned by Ford; true automotive Anglaphiles — those who buy any car made in the U.K., no matter the brand — can rattle off the eccentricities. (At one point I owned and drove a beautiful red MG A with the dread Lucas electrical system. When cold, the damn thing didn't start. I solved the problem by driving my wife's car to work.)

Bumper to bumper the XF looks more like a coupe than a midsize luxury sport sedan, with its sleek, sophisticated — as one of my neighbors remarked, “sexy” — lines. The new style begins with the re-

designed mesh-front grille and moves to the distinctive headlight cluster and then to the quintessential bonnet bulge vaguely reminiscent of the E-type Jaguar.

The body lines sweep down the sides to the trunk, which has a new lighting cluster and the Jaguar logo leaping across the lid.

Slide into the XF and the round “start” button glows red. Press it and the car springs to life with a soft growl as the round gearshift knob rises to your hand. Little doors open quietly to reveal vents for heat and a/c. Your perforated leather seats are heated in winter and cooled in summer with enough adjustable settings to assure bespoke back and leg comfort.

In the cockpit, one relaxes in British refinement rather than Germanic asceticism. There is a mélange of wood, aluminum trim and supple leather. The fully adjustable steering wheel is comfortably thick with paddle shifters for sportscar-style driving. Pressing the head of the Jaguar emblem in the center of the wheel generates a properly authoritative, admonishing honk (as opposed to a barely audible one that says, “I'm so sorry to honk at you, but you damn near T-boned me with your wretched driving; please accept my apology.”).

The three main, clustered gauges are difficult to read in bright sunlight, but at night they look terrific, with soft blue lighting. The center console is a smooth waterfall within easy reach for operation of important controls, not a button- or lever-clogged ergonomic mess. After a

short period of acclimation, I didn't even need to take my eyes off the road to use it. A quintessential quirk is a little circle on the right side of the dash, which opened the glove compartment — that is, when it worked.

The navigation-system screen was minimally adequate in size and did not require an Oxford degree to explain its operation. The very handy back-up camera has a panoramic view equal to that of the London Eye Ferris wheel at ground level.

Fitting two average-size adults in the Jag's backseat is a definite quandary — and the taller the adults, the more problematic it is. The backseats are there for “show and sell” or for holding the grand-kids' car seats. Two couples in the car is really not an option.

Driving this Jag will be a wonderfully exhilarating experience for those who really like to *feel* a car, not just to sit and steer. Power comes from a 385-horsepower, five-liter V8 that generates 380 pounds of torque that will take your breath away with zero-to-60-in-4.7-seconds speed.

Handling is crisp, responsive and effortless. The ride is what one would expect — neither soft nor hard, just right for a luxury sports car — and even at 80 mph there was very little wind noise. The six-speed transmission (it's rear-wheel-drive) is so smooth you barely know it's changing, and the 16/23 mpg is impressive. The premium model I drove had an MSRP of \$57,300; two other models are available. Dealers of BMW 5-series, Mercedes-Benz E class and Audi A6 had best be wary: this Jaguar is on the prowl and its claws are very sharp, indeed. ○



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JAN DIVINCENZO

Writing Left

Finding the right pen for the wrong-handed

As someone who prefers to write with a fountain pen, I've had to deal with a fundamental difficulty that is not so much due to pen design as to the left-right passage of English script. I am left-handed, and consequently, an "overwriter." What that means is that I rotate the writing line about 20 degrees counterclockwise and hold the pen about an inch above it. Other lefties are "underwriters": they rotate the page about 10 degrees clockwise and hold the pen below the line. Then there are the "upwriters," who turn the page horizontal and write from the bottom to the top margin. These adaptations to one difficulty — that of avoiding wet ink — produce ancillary difficulties. Sharper, edgier nibs snag, skip and sputter. Our awkward ergonomics cramps our shoulders and necks. And we sometimes bump elbows with the righty on our left.

In addressing the wet-ink problem, my first piece of advice to the left-handed fountain-pen user is to fill it with Parker Quink, the world's best-selling and fastest-drying ink. Parker spent a lot of money in the late 1920s to discover that ink, when thinned with rubbing alcohol, is absorbed quicker and thus dries quicker. My second is, if you've got an underperforming pen, have a good nibmeister like John Mottishaw set it up and adjust the point to suit your idiosyncrasies.

"A lot depends on the kind of left-hander that one is," explains Mottishaw. "The most important considerations are the predominant direction of the line, how much ink flow is wanted,

how high one holds the pen, and the amount of pressure one uses on the pen when writing. If a lefty is a 'pusher,' meaning that she or he pushes directly into the line, I will want to keep the nib from writing too wet, so that the writer's palm doesn't get dragged through wet ink. This is not as much of an issue for overwriters, as there is more time for the ink to dry. Underwriters, on the other hand, are more like right-handed writers, except they usually do more pushing with their pens. Each writer has her or his own approach, and we work closely with our customers to understand how they write and what kind of nib-and-pen combination will work best for them." John can be contacted through his Web site, www.nibs.com.

The way in which lefties avoid smudges and stains, combined with the inherent differences between writing tips, makes for greater differences in pen performance. My Pelikan 805 Souveraine has written flawlessly from the start; my Lamy 2000 required a few hundred thousand words to smooth out; my Montblanc 149 is so inconsistent that I've retired it; my FILCAO Columbia is so responsive that it seems to write ahead of me. Thus, my last piece of advice is, when shopping for a pen, try it before you buy it.

For instance, the other day I went into a pen store and com-



The Namiki Falcon's flexible nib is well-suited to left-handed writers.



pared a Visconti Van Gogh and a Namiki Falcon. The Falcon's black resin and gold trim were rather pedestrian next to the Van Gogh's vivid celluloid. But the Van Gogh's performance didn't come close to that of the Falcon. The Falcon's nib is one of the most flexible on the market, and I'm a low-pressure writer who prefers the responsiveness and control of the line such flexibility provides. And I could see that the Falcon's unique hooded nib, with its raised and extended tines, was so designed to perform the way it did. By comparison, the Van Gogh's nib was dense and inert. I could not have experienced the difference between these two pens had I not used them side-by-side. Being a lefty and more of a pen user than collector, a decision to purchase would definitely have fallen with the Falcon, the pen that most suited my hand and, given a medium nib and custom polish, could possibly become my workaday favorite. ○

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RICHARD CARLETON HACKER

What's Up Down Under?

No longer just cult favorites, Aussie wines still offer excellent value.

I'm not clairvoyant, but I predict on May 1 a form of controlled pandemonium will break out at precisely 8 a.m. at the Penfolds winery at Magill Estate, in the South Australian town of Adelaide. That is the date Penfolds's buoyant winemaker Peter Gago will officially release the 2005 Grange, arguably Australia's most celebrated and costly wine. This limited-production, five-year-old Shiraz is expected to retail for around \$450, on a par with the 2004 vintage, but nowhere approaching the \$60,565 paid in 2004 at auction for a bottle of the first Grange ever bottled in 1951.

At the other end of the spectrum, you've got the unbelievably affordable (considering their excellent qualities) Jacob's Creek Classic range, including a full-flavored Cabernet-Merlot blend retailing in some areas for less than eight dollars a bottle, while its Rieslings and Chardonnays are even less. In between are wines such as the Centenary Hill Shiraz and Penfolds Bin 389 Cabernet-Shiraz (often called "Baby Grange") for around \$30. And therein lies the value of Australia's wines — luscious, mouth-filling reds and crisp, refreshing whites affordable enough for everyday drinking, while at the higher tier (but rarely breaking the three-digit ceiling) are wines elegant enough to demand decanting and Riedel glasses. A few of these are the mouth-filling Johann Shiraz-Cabernet blend at \$88 and the voluptuous Wolf Blass Platinum Label Shiraz at \$95.

Not long ago, Aussie wines were the darlings of the wine cognoscenti. Then they were "discovered" and became mainstream-popular. But now those

down-under bottles have fallen upon hard times, as the grapes of wrath have been especially prolific in Australia. The country has suffered from a devastating decades-plus drought, coupled with violent mood swings in the weather that bring blistering summers, torrential rains after harvest when water isn't needed, debilitating frosts, and the occasional firestorm.

Also, Australia's vintners committed the non-sustainable act of grossly overplanting. Today, even with the downturn of the global economy coupled with increased competition from countries like Argentina, Chile, and Spain, there is a virtual glut of Aussie wine — which is ironic, as wine consumption is up, especially in the United States. And unlike many other commodities, wine only gets better with age: most Australian wines can be cellared from five to 50 years, depending on the varietals and vintages. And we're not just talking about reds. During a tasting with Jacob's Creek winemaker Bernard Hicklin last year on Kangaroo Island, located 26 miles off the South

Australian coast, we opened Steingarten Rieslings from 2007, 2003 and 2002. These Barossa Valley classics all exhibited steely minerality, with the older wines being sublimely complex.

So why aren't more people buying Aussie wines while prices are down? Besides the aforementioned competition and economy, there is a perceived change in the way America is looking at wine. I recently had a major wine director for one of the largest casino-hotels in Las Vegas tell me he no longer seeks out those big, booming Australian reds with alcohol levels approaching that of port. Admittedly, not all Australian wines have this trait, although I happen to like heavy tannins and thick berries, such as found in Cabernets from Coonawarra, and Shiraz blends from the Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale. But there are other, more ethereal wines, including a new wave of Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and Sauvignon Blanc from Adelaide Hills and Yarra Valley. Right in the middle of the taste spectrum you've got Semillon from Margaret River on the west coast, plus, in New South Wales, excellent Shiraz and Chardonnay from the lower Hunter Valley. And just in time for spring sipping, there are refreshing new Shiraz Rosé blends.

With "down under" seasons reversed and Australian winemakers just completing their harvest, there is talk of reducing plantings by 25 percent next autumn. Thus, bargains abound. The current 2007 vintages of reds and 2009 whites are now entering the States, so this is the ideal time to make an end play around those higher-priced California and French labels, and stock up on some of the greatest New World wines ever produced. ○

A glass of Wyndham Estate Show Reserve 2005 Chardonnay puts a refreshing spin on a sun-dappled day aboard a yacht cruising Sydney Harbor, with Sydney Harbor Bridge in the background.



Photo: Richard Carleton Hacker



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Costa Rica's Quiet Comeback

Once an up-and-coming cigar hotspot, this Central American nation is now a niche player.

When the art of cigar making migrated from Cuba to other Caribbean and Central American countries, it settled into Costa Rica somewhat late in the game. Neighboring nations with similar geographic and climatic conditions — namely, Honduras and Nicaragua — began growing tobacco and rolling cigars for export as early as the 1960s, and it wasn't until the early 1990s that Costa Rica joined the party, on a much smaller scale. That the country ever emerged on the cigar scene is largely due to the efforts of two men: an Iranian-American nightclub entrepreneur named Tony Borhani and his partner, cigar factory owner “Don” Douglas Pueringer, who together created the Bahia brand back in 1994. With its edgy, youth-oriented marketing and full-bodied Dominican-Nicaraguan blend, Bahia became one of the hottest brands of the cigar-booming 1990s, and established “Made in Costa Rica” among the aficionado crowd as something of a status symbol. Borhani stated at the time that he chose Costa Rica as a manufacturing base because it was more economically advanced and politically stable than its neighbors.

Ironically, however, it was those self-same attributes that essentially pushed Bahia, and its few contemporaries there, out of Costa Rica by the end of the decade. The proverbial “inconvenient truth” about the handmade cigar business is that it requires a fair amount of low-cost labor to produce cigars that can be sold at relatively reasonable prices in the United States. (This is, incidentally, the same reason why so few cigars are made domestically in the

U.S.) Costa Rica, with its vibrant economy and booming eco-tourism business — not to mention high import tariffs and strict work rules — simply could no longer compete with its less prosperous neighbors, with their cheaper real estate and lower standards of living. Pueringer moved his factory to Nicaragua in 2001, and Bahias have been made there ever since.

Bucanero, a boutique brand made alongside Bahia at Tabacalera Tambor, also moved its manufacturing to Nicaragua, but did not totally abandon Costa Rica. In 2005, the company began producing the aptly named Treasure of Costa Rica cigar at a small factory there. The Treasure — available in a 5 x 50 Robusto, 6 x 54 Belicoso or 5 x 44 Coronita — is a Costa Rican puro, meaning its filler, binder and wrapper were all grown in the country where it is made. It's a solid, medium-bodied, toasty cigar with a sleek, caramel-colored wrapper — spicier than most Dominicans but not as powerful as many Nicaraguans, and definitely worth a smoke.

A handful of other boutique cigar companies now operate in Costa Rica. Among the few whose products are sold in the U.S. is Tabacos de la Cordillera, headed by tobacco scientist John Vogel. Vogel's cigars — also Costa Rican puros — are rolled solely from tobacco grown on the company's own farm, from strains of genetically pure, pre-Castro Havana seeds. Another brand, Brun del Re, came to market in 2008. As with early Bahias and Bucaneros, the cigars are made from mostly imported tobacco; however, they do incorporate some Costa Rica leaf. Of Brun del Re's



Brun del Re is one of the few U.S.-distributed brands still made in Costa Rica.

four blends — Premium, Connaisseur (sic), Gold and Colonial — the Colonial is the standout: a zesty, full-bodied cigar with Cuban-seed Nicaraguan filler and a Costa Rican maduro wrapper. The Gold blend also uses Costa Rican leaf in the filler.

Meanwhile, despite its decline as a manufacturing hub, Costa Rica has solidified its role on the short list of countries — along with Mexico, Brazil, and the U.S.'s Connecticut River Valley — that grow top-notch maduro wrappers. Brands that use its velvety, aromatic leaves for maduros include CAO, for its limited-edition Escaparate Costa Rica Maduro; Rocky Patel, for its The Edge Cabinet Maduro; Graycliff, for its Espresso line; and Carlos Toraño, for its Reserva Selecta Maduro. There's no such thing as a guarantee of quality, but if your cigar has a wrapper from Costa Rica, you can at least be assured that a substantial investment was made to grow it there, and that the decision to do so was not made lightly. ○



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R.I.P. BNB

BNB Concept, an idea whose time had come, is gone.

BY NORMA BUCHANAN

Even as Geneva's SIHH luxury-watch show was opening its doors, on Jan. 18, the first whiff of hot watch-industry news was wafting through the halls, fresh as the croissants sitting atop the espresso bars. Luxury-watch movement-maker BNB Concept had, that very morning, gone out of business.

BNB had been an industry phenom. Founded in 2004, it quickly found fame by making some of the most innovative, iconoclastic mechanical movements anyone had ever seen (although words like "wacky" and "outlandish" might also apply). Among them were Concord's C1 QuantumGravity, whose tourbillon was located outside the watchcase proper, and whose power reserve was indicated by a vial of green fluid; Jacob & Co.'s Quentin, which had seven barrels and a power reserve of 31 days; and Romain Jerome's Day & Night, which had two tourbillons but did not tell the time. BNB had several large customers and many small ones: during BNB's heyday, a total of some 30 companies. They included Hublot, Hermès, Bell & Ross, Jörg Hysek, DeWitt, Franc Vila and Gérard Charles.

But the watch industry's alarm at BNB's demise was due as much to the company's symbolic role as to its actual



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one. BNB had soared as high as it did — at its apex it employed about 200 people, and its sales were growing at a rate of 200% per year — on the wings of a seemingly unbridled luxury-watch boom. From 2004 until the global financial crisis hit in the fall of 2008, there seemed to be no limit to the number of brands the market could support or to what consumers would pay for their products. Nor, it seemed, was there any limit to consumers' appetite for complications and intricate watch features like those promoted by BNB and its customers. The company's failure, due to heavy debt and, by some reports, nearly \$10 million worth of uncollectible accounts receivable, marked the end of an era of frenzied horological excess. It was, for many, concrete proof that the party really was over.

BNB CONCEPT was founded in the Swiss village of Crans-près-Céligny, near Nyon, by Mathias Buttet, Enrico Barbasini and Michel Navas, all of whom had worked for Franck Muller. Buttet, the CEO, was trained as a microtechnology engineer before moving into the watch industry, where he had worked for some 20 years. (The letters "BNB" are the initials of the men's last names.)

The company's first movements, contained in watches by a handful of high-end brands, including Jacob & Co. and the newly revamped Hublot, were unveiled at Baselworld in 2005.

News of these unorthodox movements, and the company that made them, spread quickly. Sales skyrocketed and the number of employees grew, in just three years, to 130 people. Back orders mounted: some customers were told they would have to wait three years before they would get their movements. Most orders were tiny: the company specialized in short runs of fewer than 100 pieces.

In 2007, Buttet bought out his partners. The same year, Buttet built a new factory and headquarters in Duillier, complete with CNC machines and other up-to-date, and costly, machinery.

BNB was becoming a watch-world celebrity. Phrases like "phenomenal growth," and "fine-watchmaking mete-



The company's CNC department, which made components

orite" dotted articles written about it. One noted the company's "dazzling start in just three years."

A kind of Silicon Valley spirit prevailed at the factory. The average age of the watchmakers was 27; Buttet hired many of them directly from watchmaking school. All were free to set their own hours, even if those hours were in the middle of the night, as long as they completed the prescribed amount of work. It was an unusual approach in any industry, never mind in the tradition-bound Swiss watch industry. Not only that, Buttet eschewed an assembly-line approach to production. Instead, each watchmaker made the entire movement his or herself. That way, they could feel the satisfaction of having been the piece's sole author.

The employees seemed to appreciate the liberal policies. The morning that Buttet announced the company's closing, two BNB employees lamented to a Swiss newspaper that they would never know such agreeable working conditions again.

In April 2008, Buttet assembled a group of seven BNB watchmakers under



BNB Concept produced movements for such high-end watches as Jacob & Co.'s Quenttin and DeWitt's Antipode.

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an umbrella called “Confrérie Horlogère.” These watchmakers — four men and three women, from all over the world — would make watches under their own names. The idea was to let them develop their own watchmaking identities. In one online magazine interview, Buttet described the Confrérie as a “brand incubator” and the potential brands within it as “baby chicks,” some of which would grow up and others die.

The Confrérie’s first fruits were launched last year at Baselworld. As you might expect, they were an offbeat group of watches. One, called the Tourbillon Résilience, by David Rodriguez, bore scars and cracks alluding to the abuse its maker suffered as a child. It also had an engraving of the Inca site Machu Picchu in Peru. Another, called Bel Canto, by Ranieri Illicher, was a minute repeater whose case served as a bell for the repeater function, replacing the chime of a traditional repeater. Another piece, called ImmenSEAty, by Gabriel Salgado de Arce, was a movement only, not yet cased, which was entirely covered with engravings of sea animals and plants.

Buttet himself developed a watch under the Confrérie umbrella. Called the Clef du Temps, it is actually more of an anti-watch, allowing the wearer to adjust it so that time passes as quickly or slowly as he wants. Buttet donated one Clef du Temps watch to the Only Watch charity auction, held in Monaco in September. It brought €280,000 (about \$390,000).

Following his company’s collapse, Buttet has gone to work for his largest former customer, Hublot, based in nearby Nyon. There, in Hublot’s spanking-new factory, he will, according to Hublot chief Jean-Claude Biver, head up Hublot’s new haute horlogerie division. (Buttet himself did not respond to an e-mail request for comment about BNB’s failure and his future plans.) Biver told *WatchTime* he is in the process of buying BNB’s watchmaking machinery and plans to hire 30 to 40 of BNB’s watchmakers. They include the seven members of the Confrérie, who will work under the new rubric “Confrérie Hublot,” making watches to sell for more than \$250,000. ○



The Clef du Temps

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Confrérie Horlogère member Brigitte Carneiro

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CHINA TO THE RESCUE

With the Chinese market booming again, the Swiss watch industry breathes a sigh of relief.

What a difference a year makes.

BY JOE THOMPSON

In 2009, the mood at SIHH (Salon International de la Haute Horlogerie) was morose as watch retailers and executives confronted what the Richemont Group described at the time as “the toughest market conditions since [the group’s] formation 20 years ago.”

The gloom was justified: for the Swiss watch industry, 2009 was miserable, marked by layoffs, production cuts, and meager sales. For the year, Swiss watch exports fell 22 percent in value versus 2008, according to the Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry (FH). Of the 30 markets that account for more than 90 percent of Swiss watch sales, only three registered increases. Of the 27 markets that were down, 24 were down by double-digit percentages.

So imagine my surprise to find watch executives popping corks and dancing jigs at SIHH this January. Okay, I exaggerate,

but only slightly. What could account for such strange behavior in the wake of such a wicked year? Show attendance was up 10 percent to 12,500 buyers, a welcome sign surely, but nothing to get giddy about.

The short answer is China.

The longer answer is that Swiss watch executives, surprised by unexpectedly strong Christmas-season sales, are convinced that the worst of the 2009 crisis is over and that the recovery that began in earnest in China and elsewhere in Asia (Japan excluded) in the second half of the year is about to spread to other markets in 2010 (but probably not the United States). “Brands are happy to be out of the crisis — or think that they are out of the crisis,” said Vacheron Constantin CEO Juan-Carlos Torres, sounding a cautionary note. Said Roger Dubuis COO Claude Vuillemez, “The mood is better. We are a bit more confident.”

Some executives worry that the good mood is too good. “Last year at the show the mood was worse than the reality,” said Jaeger-LeCoultre CEO Jerome Lambert.

Now he and others suspect that sentiment has swung too far in the other direction, that the mood at the 2010 SIHH was bubblier than market conditions warrant.

To a great extent China is responsible for both overreactions. The global financial collapse that occurred in the fall of 2008 terrified the Chinese more than folks in mature markets because this generation of Chinese retailers had never experienced a downturn, Lambert says. "In November 2008, there was a sense of crisis in China. At SIHH 2009, Chinese buyers were risk-averse." Their concern and caution contributed heavily to the gloom at the 2009 show. "Then, suddenly, in April, the crisis in China was over," Lambert says. "People were back in the shops." By the fall, China's business had rebounded. By December, business was booming. Examples abound. Vacheron Constantin's Torres, who has 24 boutiques in China, says with astonishment, "I have orders from one retailer in China for 100 tourbillons. I only produce 200 tourbillons per year for the world!" One tiny (100 square meters) Vacheron Constantin boutique in Hong Kong sells 10 pieces a day, mostly to customers from China. These watches sell at a 10 percent to 20 percent premium over the Geneva price, Torres says. Such anecdotes explain the startling Swiss watch export figures to China for December, up 43.5 percent over December 2008.

Led by China, other Asia-Pacific markets are rushing toward recovery: South Korea (+66 percent), Hong Kong (+27 percent), India (+27 percent), and Australia (+13 percent) registered strong sales in December. On the first day of the SIHH show, Richemont reported that for the October-through-December period, "the Asia-Pacific region was the strongest performer, having grown by 25 percent at actual rates." Two days later, the Swatch Group announced that "a phenomenal record month of December" had led to a rebound in watch sales in the second half of the year. The Asia-Pacific region was a major factor.

No doubt Asia's boffo December figures boosted the battered spirits of watch executives at the show, which ran from January 18-22. With business picking up, some brands reported shortages of core

product, so watch companies, which had cut production in 2009, are boosting production (and prices) in 2010. Still, some executives expressed reservations about the whiff of euphoria over the China boom. A glance at the global watch map shows numerous trouble spots, in Europe, the Middle East, Russia, and most dramatically, the United States. For all the hullabaloo about strong December sales, the surge was spotty: 60 percent of Switzerland's 30 markets reported a drop in watch exports for the month. Keep in mind that those declines came against catastrophically bad figures for December 2008, meaning the 2009 figures were catastrophically worse. One stark reminder that the watch industry was not quite out of the woods came on the fair's opening day, when BNB, the highly touted maker of exotic high mechanical movements, hung a GONE BUST shingle on its door. (See "R.I.P.: BNB" in this issue.) The FH, which gathers industry export data, took a notably restrained tone in its forecast for 2010, issued in early February: "Signals on the markets indicate that 2010 should see a turnaround for Swiss watch exports. It will, however, be modest and will only really be felt in the second half of the year."

"AND IT WON'T BE felt at all in the United States." The FH didn't actually say that, of course, but it may as well have, since everybody else at SIHH did. The United States staggered out of 2009 a battered shadow of the colossus that bestrode the watch world from 1998 to 2007 when it was Switzerland's top export market. In 2009, Swiss watch exports to the U.S. fell by 38 percent. Only Russia (-51 percent) and Thailand (-39 percent) had a worse year. One measure of how bad things are here is that when exports to U.S. fell a further 16 percent in December 2009 against an abysmal performance in December 2008, the FH actually cheered. "The United States improved its performance considerably," it noted in a statement, thrilled that the market had finally stopped dropping by 35 to 45 percent per month.

U.S. attendance at the show was down 20 percent. That's on top of a 60 percent



Girard-Perregaux's Laureato GP Quartz 40th Anniversary



IWC's Portuguese Grand Complication



The scene at SIHH



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drop last year. That's because the Richemont Group, whose brands dominate the show — 13 of the 19 exhibitors are Richemont Group brands — invited 20 percent fewer U.S. retailers this year. The backstory behind the fewer invitations is that Cartier, Richemont's cash cow, shocked the U.S. retail community by culling its herd of U.S. retailers in December. Cartier cut nearly half of its doors in the United States (140 out of 300), sources close to Cartier North America confirmed. Cartier trimmed its wholesale network to reflect the new, reduced realities of the U.S. market and to get better control of its brand. Too many Cartier retailers competing for too few customers led to too much discounting. Cartier wants to work more closely with fewer, higher performing ac-

counts and rely on a smaller, stronger dealer network and its own boutiques. Hence, the retail blood bath. Cartier added insult to injury by cutting jewelers' margins to 37 percent. Other brands are also closing doors. François Bennahmias, CEO of Audemars Piguet North America, for example, has cut AP's U.S. doors from 45 in 2008 to 38 now. It's all part of a shakeout now underway among U.S. retail jewelers.

One the whole, expectations for the U.S. market remain pretty low for 2010. While there are some signs of improvement in the U.S., AP's Bennahmias expressed the consensus view that U.S. watch sales this year will be flat. The U.S. market needs one more year to flush out the excess inventory in the pipeline and to get an uptick in the U.S. economy. That would lead to genuine improvement in 2011. The mood remains cautious, however. Says the U.S. head of a Richemont brand, "It will take eight to 12 years for the U.S. to return to 2007 sales levels."

Maybe so. But as the CEO of a Geneva-based brand popular in the U.S. noted, for all its problems, the United States remains Switzerland's number two market. "Even a U.S. down 40 percent," he said, "is still my top market."

ON THE PRODUCT front, a new, post-Great-Recession sensibility has emerged. "After the exuberance seen in recent years, watch firms have reverted to a form of classicism and fundamental values that have stood them well over the centuries," observed Agnès le Métayer, an SIHH show official. The thin, elegant watch with a clean classical face, which seemed

an endangered species just three years ago, is back in the starring role. Vacheron Constantin unveiled the world's thinnest hand-wound mechanical watch and Piaget the world's thinnest automatic watch. Spare, elegant dials abounded. So did updates of historical and vintage looks. IWC, for example, reintroduced its Portuguese family of watches, which first appeared in 1939. The appearance of three highly complicated pieces deemed Grand Complications reinforced the classical/historical theme: IWC's Portuguese Grand Complication combines a minute repeater and a perpetual calendar; Jaeger-LeCoultre's Grande Tradition Grande Complication and Vacheron Constantin's Patrimony Traditionnelle Caliber 2755 both combine a minute repeater, a perpetual calendar and a tourbillon. (To qualify as grand complications by the classical definition, the watches should also have a rattrapante chronograph, but let us not carp.) Cartier turned heads by showing nine high-mechanical men's watches produced in its own *manufacture* in La Chaux-de-Fonds, including its first perpetual calendar watch (Tortue Perpetual Calendar). And a couple of pieces created some special buzz. Girard-Perregaux unveiled a \$12,000 quartz watch, the Laureato GP Quartz 40th Anniversary, to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the dawn of the quartz era. Montblanc's Timewriter 1 Metamorphosis has a unique retractable dial that turns a three-hand watch into a chronograph.

What follows is a sampling of the new watches unveiled at SIHH and other exhibitions in the Geneva area. ○



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Panerai

OVER THE PAST five years, Officine Panerai has launched a parade of in-house movements, starting with the P.2002 and continuing through the P.9000 series. Now there's another, the manual-wind caliber P.999, which will debut in a trio of new Radiomir models. One is the **Radiomir Ora Rosa – 42 MM**, a dressy (for Panerai at least) limited edition (500 pieces) watch with, as its name implies, a rose-gold case. The movement is a slim 3.4 mm thick and 12 lignes wide, with a power reserve of 60 hours, a frequency of 21,600 vph, and 19 jewels. The case, a "mere" 42 mm in diameter, is on the small side for Panerai, most of whose models are 44 mm or more. The case has a satin finish, which contrasts with the polished finish of the bezel, and removable wire loops for attaching the strap. It's water-resistant to 100 meters and has a see-through sapphire back. The dial has the brand's signature "sandwich" structure. The hands and markers are luminous; the crystal, made of sapphire, is nonreflective. There is a running seconds subdial at 9 o'clock. The watch's suggested retail price is \$17,400.

Two other watches with the new movement are steel and titanium Radiomir models, both with 42 mm cases and black dials. They're priced at \$7,400 and \$8,100, respectively. They contain a version of the movement labeled 999/1,

which has raquette fine adjustment, rather than the swan's-neck regulator of the 999, and a slimmer profile of just 3 mm.

Panerai's other new models include one made of a new composite material that combines aluminum and ceramic. The company says the material is harder than the ceramic used by other watch manufacturers. The watch is called the **Radiomir Composite Marina Militare 8 Giorni – 47 MM**. It contains the hand-wound Panerai P. 2002/7 caliber, which, thanks to its three barrels, has a power reserve of eight days. Like the Ora Rosa, this watch has a brown dial. Paired with the brown case and dark tan strap, it makes for an unusual, monochrome look. Suggested retail price: \$14,900.



The Radiomir Ora Rosa – 42 MM



Right: the Radiomir Composite Marina Militare 8 Giorni. Below: the satin-finished case of the Ora Rosa



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IWC

IWC SCHAFFHAUSEN has declared 2010 the year of the Portuguese, introducing a plethora of new models to the historic line introduced in 1939. The watch got its name from its original importers in the Portuguese cities of Lisbon and Porto, who commissioned a timepiece that reflected their country's history of seafaring and exploration with a design reminiscent of nautical instruments.

Leading the fleet of new Portuguese models is the new **Portuguese Yacht Club Chronograph**, an updated version of the original, IWC's most popular watch of the 1960s and '70s. The modern Yacht Club contains IWC's in-house caliber 89360, the automatic chrono movement developed for IWC's Da Vinci Chrono-

graph and which also powers its Big Ingenieur Chronograph (tested elsewhere in this issue). The movement, with its signature double-pawl winding system, is spring-mounted in the case, and stores 68 hours of power. The chronograph can record times up to 12 hours and can be easily reset to zero through the use of its flyback function. Reading times on the chronograph is simple: the hour and minute counters share a common subdial at 12 o'clock, so the results can be read like a normal time display. The other subdial, at 6 o'clock, is a small seconds display, and the date display is in a window at 3 o'clock. The red, center-mounted stopwatch hand is useful in recording short intervals.

A screw-down crown is located between the pushers on the side of the case, ensuring water-resistance of 60 meters. The movement is visible through a sapphire exhibition caseback. The dial features a railroad-track-style chapter ring, Arabic numerals, and, for the first time in a Portuguese watch, luminous hands and indices. The Yacht Club is available in three versions: steel case with silver-plated dial, steel case with black dial (both \$12,600) or rose-gold case with slate-colored dial (\$23,100). All are offered with black rubber straps with folding clasps.

Also new to the Portuguese family are several high-end complications, including a Perpetual Calendar; a Portuguese version of the Tourbillon Mystère and a hand-wound tourbillon with the signature of brand founder F.A. Jones (limited to 500 pieces); a Grand Complication (limited to 50 pieces); and a Minute Repeater (limited to 500 pieces each in platinum and rose gold).



IWC's Portuguese Yacht Club Chronograph family, with IWC caliber 89360

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Audemars Piguet

THE ROYAL OAK OFFSHORE collection has been expanded with several models this year, among them a limited-edition **Grand Prix** watch. It comes in three versions, all incorporating forged carbon, which is made of carbon fibers compressed in a mold and heated. One piece has a forged-carbon case and forged-carbon/ceramic bezel (1,750 pieces, \$34,500); one a rose-gold case and forged-carbon/ceramic bezel (650 pieces, \$56,300); and the third a platinum case and forged-carbon/ceramic bezel (75 pieces, \$94,300). All contain the in-house self-winding chronograph Caliber 3126/3840, which has a power reserve of 60 hours, a frequency of 21,600 vph and a balance with eight inertia blocks used to adjust the rate. It has a stop-seconds feature and a fast-adjustment, instant-jump date. The case is 44 mm wide, 15.65 mm thick and water-resistant to 100 meters. Its back is engraved with the words "Royal Oak Offshore Grand Prix – Limited Edition." The color of the dial depends on the case material: in the forged-carbon-case model, red is most prominent; in the rose-gold model, it is black; and in the platinum one, blue. All the dials have indentations at 1:30, 4:30, 7:30 and 10:30 suggesting automobile air scoops. The subdials were designed to look like dashboard dials, the crown to resemble a gear and the bezel a ventilated brake disc.

Audemars Piguet has also unveiled the new **Royal Oak Equation of Time** model, which contains the same Caliber 2120/2808, with equation of time and perpetual calendar, that the brand introduced a decade ago in its Jules Audemars collection. The equation of time is indicated by means of a center-mounted hand and a scale, graduated from -15 to +15 minutes, printed on the dial flange. Each movement is adjusted ac-

The Royal Oak Offshore Grand Prix with forged carbon bezel and rose-gold case

cording to the longitude chosen by its owner so that the equation of time reading will be precise. The watch, an automatic, also has a leap-year indicator, a moon-phase display and subdials showing the times of sunrise and sunset. Suggested retail price: \$98,600 for the rose-gold model shown here and \$75,800 for stainless steel. The case is 42 mm in diameter and has a transparent back that shows off the filigreed rotor bearing the initials "AP."

The Royal Oak Equation of Time

The Grand Prix version with forged carbon case



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The updated Caliber 1003,
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The Ultra-fine 1968

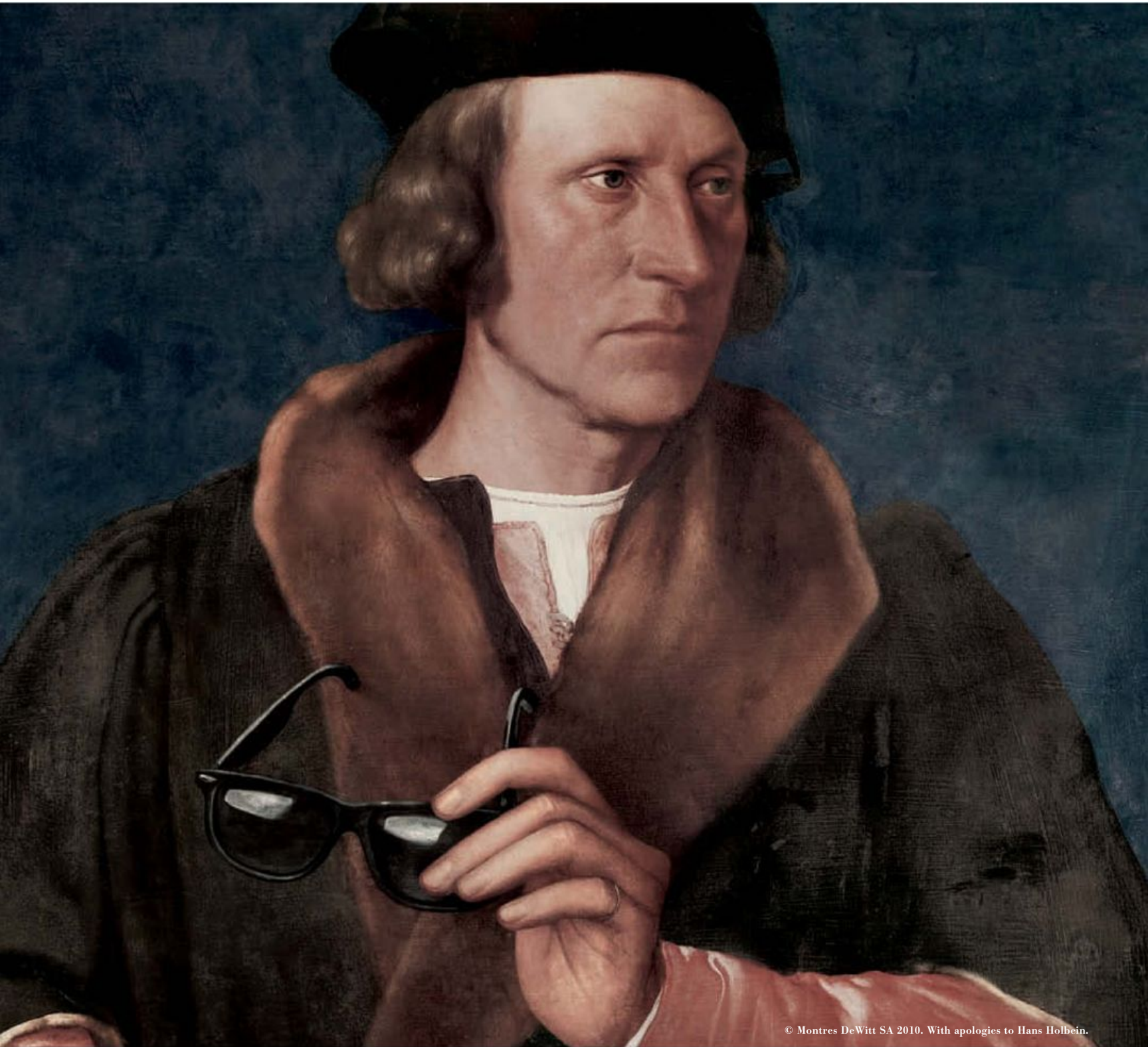


The Ultra-fine 1955

Vacheron Constantin

ONCE UPON A TIME, chubby watches were derided as “turnips”; the “tulips” were the slim, elegant ones. Those days may be coming back, and, if so, Vacheron Constantin will be in the vanguard of the shift thanks to watches like these two new additions to the company’s **Historiques** collection. Both contain ultra-thin movements, albeit reworked and updated ones, from the company’s past. One watch, the **Historique Ultra-fine 1955**, is equipped with a rebuilt version of the hand-wound 1003, first introduced in 1955 as part of the company’s bicentennial celebration. The movement is a CD-slender 1.64 mm thin and is, Vacheron says, the slimmest mechanical movement in the world. It’s also small, just nine lignes, or 20.8 mm, in diameter, just like the original 1003. Unlike the old 1003, though, the new one has a gold mainplate and bridges. It has a frequency of 18,000 vph and a power reserve of about 30 hours, and bears the Geneva Seal. The watch itself, 36 mm in diameter and made of rose gold, is the world’s thinnest mechanical, just 4.1 mm thick. Its design was inspired by one of the original 1003-caliber watches but has been updated with a transparent caseback. Price: \$22,900.

Vacheron’s other new ultra-thin watch is a square model based on a Vacheron watch from 1968 and containing an automatic movement, Caliber 1120, that was launched that year. The new watch is called the **Historique Ultra-fine 1968**. The movement is just 2.45 mm thick and the case 5.5 mm, thinner even than the original 1968 watch, which measured 6.52 mm. The 1120 has been rebuilt and now has a gold oscillating weight. Its frequency is 19,800 vph and it has a power reserve of about 40 hours. The case is 35.2 mm wide. Price: \$28,200.



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The Richard Lange Referenzuhr

The Lange 1 Daymatic

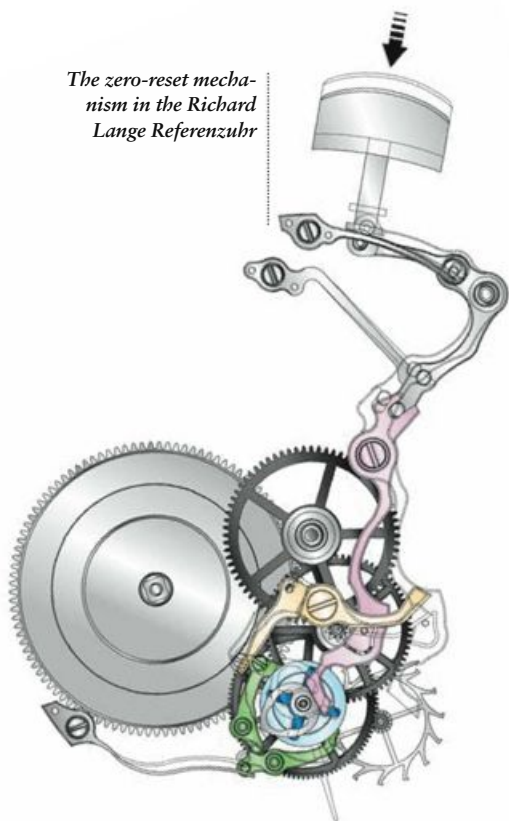
A. Lange & Söhne

THE LANGE 1, the best-known A. Lange & Söhne model, is now available in an automatic version called the **Lange 1 Daymatic**. It contains a new movement, the L021.1, developed in-house and equipped with an in-house hairspring. The Daymatic's dial is a mirror image of the dial on the manual-wind Lange 1 except for one feature: the "auf-ab" power-reserve indicator of the manual-wind has been replaced by a retrograde day indicator. The company points out that having the hour-and-minute subdial on the right side of the dial is an advantage: those who wear their watches on their left wrists — that is, most watch wearers — need only pull their shirt cuffs back a little way to see the time. The movement has a power reserve of 50 hours and a frequency of 21,600 vph. The case, which is 39.5 mm wide, one millimeter larger than the Lange 1, comes in yellow or rose gold (both are \$37,700) or platinum (\$50,900) and has a transparent sapphire back. The rotor has a platinum section on

the outer rim to give it more winding efficiency. The rotor is embossed with the A. Lange & Söhne signature.

The company's other introductions include a new version of the Richard Lange, the large-balance, pocketwatch-inspired model the company introduced in 2006. The new watch has an added feature: a zero-restart function that enables the wearer to return the seconds hand (located in a subdial, rather than center-mounted, as in the original Richard Lange) to zero by pressing a button and then restart the hand by releasing the button. The watch, called the **Richard Lange Referenzuhr**, can therefore be used as a chronograph, or can be synchronized with a reference clock or time signal. The button is above the crown, at 2 o'clock. The watch has an in-house balance spring. Its movement, the L033.1, is manually wound. The case is 40.5 mm in diameter and available in rose gold (limited edition of 75 pieces, \$52,200) or platinum (50 pieces, \$65,400).

The zero-reset mechanism in the Richard Lange Referenzuhr





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Cartier

ONCE KNOWN CHIEFLY for its women's watches, Cartier is making a huge push to capture a bigger chunk of the men's-watch market. One part of the company's strategy is launching in-house, often complicated, movements. This year the company brought out several of them. Its headliner is a watch called the **Calibre de Cartier**, which contains an automatic movement labeled the 1904 MC. Cartier says the movement is modeled on the Jaeger-LeCoultre 8000, which Jaeger developed for Cartier and which Cartier introduced in a Pasha model in 2005. However, the 1904 is an improved and updated version of that caliber, Cartier says. (The caliber is named for the year in which Cartier made a wristwatch for the Brazilian pilot Alberto Santos-Dumont. That watch was the inspiration for the company's Santos collection.) The company calls it "the first self-winding movement to be produced entirely by Cartier." It's 4 mm thick and 11 ½ lignes in diameter. It has two barrels and a power reserve of 48 hours. The movement winds in both directions and makes use of a pawl system for greater winding efficiency. It also has a stop-seconds feature. The watch itself is 42 mm in diameter and available in rose gold (\$22,000), steel (\$6,500), or a combination of both (\$9,100).

Cartier has also added some very complicated men's pieces to its lineup. They include a new Tortue self-winding perpetual calendar, containing the 9422 MC caliber, which shows the day by means of a retrograde hand and the date by Arabic numerals surrounding the dial. The month and leap-year counter are at 12 o'clock. The case comes in white or rose gold (\$57,000 and \$53,300, respectively), and measures 46 mm by 51 mm.

Another is the **Ronde de Cartier Astrotourbillon**, whose tourbillon rotates around the watch's dial, once per minute, its V-shaped balance bridge serving as a seconds indicator. The watch contains the double-barreled Caliber 9451 MC, which is 16 ¾ lignes, or 38 mm, in diameter and 9 mm thick. Cartier designed and manufactures the movement in-house. As you might imagine, the unorthodox display required an unorthodox movement. Among its unusual features: the gear train had to be laid out differently than that in a standard tourbillon watch; the tourbillon carriage required a platinum counterweight, hidden under the dial, to maintain equilibrium; and the carriage itself had to be extremely light to control its inertia and is hence made of titanium. The case is 47 mm in diameter and available in rose (\$124,000) or white gold (\$133,000).



*The Tortue XL
Perpetual Calendar*

*The Calibre de Cartier
Astrotourbillon*



The Calibre de Cartier



MT. EVEREST PENSIONER

Sir Ranulph Fiennes has been called "the world's greatest living explorer" by the Guinness Book of World Records. However, on his 65th birthday, earlier this year, the media in his native Britain called him an old-aged pensioner. "I receive free bus passes and other government incentives to help me accept that I'm now old and fragile," smiles the mischievous adventurer. Yet only a few months later, Sir Ranulph became not only the oldest Briton to reach the summit of Mt. Everest, he also set a record for being the first human to walk to the North Pole, South Pole, and to summit Mt. Everest. We designed the Soarway GMT with world travelers like Sir Ranulph in mind and are honored that he tested a prototype of the watch on his most recent expedition.

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The ExoTourbillon Chronograph



uses column-wheel switching, is operated by means of a single pusher in the crown. There is a 30-minute counter at 3 o'clock. The watch also tells the time in a second time zone and has a day/night indicator. Local time is set by means of a pusher in the side of the case at 8 o'clock. The running seconds indicator is at 9 o'clock. The case has a transparent back protected by a hinged cover that is inscribed with the signature of Demetrio Cabiddu, the technical director of Montblanc's high-horology factory in Villeret (Montblanc's parent company, the Richemont Group, bought the factory,

where Minerva-brand watches used to be made, in 2006). Cabiddu oversaw development of the movement. The case is 47 mm in diameter and comes in rose gold (eight pieces, \$236,100) or white gold (also eight pieces, \$249,600).

The Villeret collection has another new chronograph, the **Vintage Chronograph**, which was inspired by Minerva chronographs from the first half of the last century. Like many of them, it has a spiral tachymeter scale in the middle of the dial. Thanks to the spiral shape, the scale is long enough to measure speeds over periods of time as long as three minutes. The dial has a telemeter scale on its perimeter. The watch contains Caliber 16.29, which has a screwed balance, a column wheel and a frequency of 18,000 vph. The case is 43.5 mm in diameter and comes either in rose gold with a white enamel dial or white gold with a black enamel dial. There will be 58 pieces of each, priced at \$49,900 and \$52,600, respectively.

The Vintage Chronograph



Montblanc

A NEW MODEL in Montblanc's Villeret collection provides a fresh twist on the tourbillon. In the **ExoTourbillon Chronograph**, equipped with Caliber 16.60, the watch's balance sits outside of the tourbillon cage. There are a couple of reasons for this unusual layout, the company says. First, separating the balance from the cage isolates it from the movements of the escapement, which would disturb its oscillations. Second, the balance, which is unusually large, would require an outsized cage to contain it and create an unnecessarily large drain on the movement's power. Instead, the balance rotates on its own axis while the cage turns below it. The chronograph, which

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Piaget

THIN WAS A THEME at SIHH this year, and Piaget played it loud and clear with three of its new models. One commemorates the 50th anniversary of the introduction of what was then the world's thinnest self-winding movement, Caliber 12P. The watch, called the **Altiplano 43 mm Anniversary Edition**, contains a new, ultra-thin caliber, the 1200P, which is just 2.35 mm thick. Piaget says it is the thinnest automatic movement now on the market, and that the watch itself, just 5.25 mm thick, and showing just the hours and minutes, is the thinnest automatic watch.

Like the 12P, the 1200P has a micro-rotor (made of platinum for extra weight and hence winding power), which takes up less room than a standard winding rotor. It also has very slim gears: they're about half as thick as those on most watches. The movement, which is $13 \frac{1}{4}$ lignes in diameter, has a frequency of 21,600 mph and a 40-hour power reserve. It is visible through the transparent caseback.

The case is 43 mm wide. The crystal is flat rather than convex to accentuate the case's slimness. There are two versions of the watch, both limited editions of 235 pieces each (the number was chosen because of the movement's 2.35-mm thickness). One has a rose-gold case with dark blue dial (\$21,000); the other a white-gold case with black dial (\$22,000).

Piaget is using a slightly different version of the 1200P, the 1208P, with small seconds and a gold, rather than platinum, micro-rotor, in another ultra-thin watch, the **Altiplano 43 mm**. Unlike the anniversary model, this one is not a limited edition and will be part of the regular Piaget collection. The case is made of rose (\$18,900) or white gold (\$19,000).

The third of Piaget's new thin watches, the **Altiplano Double Jeu 43 mm** (\$31,000 in rose gold, \$32,000 in white gold), is actually two watches with two ultra-thin calibers. The upper case, containing Caliber 838P, lifts up to reveal the lower one, containing a new movement, Caliber 832P. The latter has a 24-hour scale. Piaget launched the first version of the Double Jeu in 2007; in that model, the bottom watch, equipped with Caliber 830P, on which the new 832P is based, showed the time on a 12-hour scale.



The unlimited version of the Altiplano with Caliber 1208P



The Altiplano Anniversary watch

The Altiplano Double Jeu





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Jaeger-LeCoultre

IN 1956, JAEGER-LECOULTRE introduced the world's first automatic movement with alarm function, Caliber 815. Since then the company has produced a parade of improved, sometimes souped-up versions of that movement, including, most recently, Caliber 956, which came out in 2008. That movement powers this new **Master Memovox**, with a 40-mm case in rose gold (\$20,350) or steel (\$9,600). Caliber 956 has a large, free-sprung balance and a winding rotor on ceramic ball bearings, requiring no lubrication. Its gears have a new tooth profile designed to ensure smoother transmission. It has a rapid date-change mechanism.

The company's other new watches include the extraordinarily complex **Master Grande Tradition Grande Complication** (limited edition of 75 pieces, \$350,000), which has a perpetual calendar and minute repeater. Among its many unusual features is a flying tourbillon that rotates around the dial, acting as an hour hand. Rather than showing mean time, as a standard hour hand does, it shows side-real time, which differs slightly from mean time (exactly how much depends on the date). Mean time is indicated by a small sun that rotates around the perimeter of the dial once every 24 hours. (The hour and minutes hand, of course, also indicate mean, or "official" time.) The watch has a rotating sky chart that shows the stars as they appear from the Northern Hemisphere. The minute repeater is also unusual: the gongs are made of a special alloy and, rather than being round, as in most repeaters, have a square cross-section.

This provides a larger contact point so that the hammer can hit more forcefully. The hammers themselves are unorthodox in design; thanks to a special joint on a moveable arm, they receive extra acceleration right before they hit the gongs, making the sound louder and richer. The movement, the in-house Caliber 945, has a silicon lever and escape wheel.



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I Roger Dubuis

THE NEWLY REDESIGNED Excalibur collection, the flagship of the recently revamped Roger Dubuis brand, includes a minute repeater with flying tourbillon. The movement, RD08, has a platinum, double micro-rotor self-winding system and is manufactured in-house, right down to the hairspring. It bears the Geneva Seal. It's 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ lignes in diameter, has 415 components, is 8.8 mm thick and has a frequency of 21,600 vph. Its power reserve is 60 hours. The watch has a rose-gold case and is 45 mm in diameter (it is also available in platinum). As part of the Excalibur redesign, the dial has been refashioned and now features longer numerals and a two-tone, black-and-gray flange. Inside the flange a broad, transparent arc provides a view of the movement. The watch is being manufactured in a limited series of 28 pieces in rose gold and eight pieces in platinum, at \$505,000 and \$545,000, respectively.

Only slightly less limited (88 pieces) is another new Excalibur model, the **Bi-Retrograde Jumping Date**. The date display consists of two large arcs graduated from 1 to 15 and from 16 to 31. Two hands move through the arcs in one-day jumps pointing to the date. Eight of the watch's hour markers are visible through the date arcs. The watch contains a new movement, RD 14B, which is an automatic with a frequency of 28,800 vph and a power reserve of 48 hours. It's one of four new movements Roger Dubuis unveiled at SIHH. (The others were an automatic tourbillon, the RD 520; an automatic chronograph, the RD 781; and a COSC-certified automatic, the RD 821). The case is white gold. Suggested retail: \$40,900.



*The Excalibur
Bi-Retrograde
Jumping Date*



*The Excalibur with
flying tourbillon and
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The new 38-mm
Slim Classique

Ralph Lauren

LAST YEAR SAW the debut of Ralph Lauren watches, the product of a joint venture between the famed clothing designer and the Richemont Group. This year brings a handful of variations on existing models in the brand's three collections: **Slim Classique**, **Stirrup** and **Sporting**. They include new, smaller sizes of the Slim Classique and the Sporting Chronograph. The former is a 38-mm model, the same as the original 42-mm size, with the same 2.1-mm-thin, hand-wound movement made by Piaget. The new 38-mm versions come in rose gold or white gold (\$12,300 and \$13,500, respectively). Both have a polished caseback that can be engraved. The dials bear a guilloché barleycorn pattern, with 80 waves spiraling around from the center and extending onto the bezel. The watches have alligator straps or, for women, fabric ones. There are also new diamond versions of both the 38-mm and 42-mm sizes.

The smaller new Sporting Chronograph is 39 mm in diameter (the original is 45 mm). It comes with a steel case and steel bracelet (with black or white dial, \$8,400), steel case and alligator strap (white dial only, \$7,300), or rose-gold case and alligator strap (white dial only, \$19,400). The movement, an automatic, is from Jaeger-LeCoultre. It has a power reserve of 48 hours. The caseback is transparent sapphire; the crystal has a nonreflective coating on both sides. The case is water-resistant to 50 meters.



The Sporting
Chronograph has
a movement from
Jaeger-LeCoultre
(RL750)



The Sporting
Chronograph with
39-mm diameter

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Van Cleef & Arpels

NOTED WATCHMAKER Jean-Marc Wiederrecht, head of the Swiss movement manufacturer Agenhor SA, developed the module for Van Cleef & Arpels's headline introduction this year: **Le Pont des Amoureux**, or "The Lovers' Bridge" (\$116,000). The watch has two retrograde displays, one for the hours and one for the minutes. The displays' "hands" consist of two figures — a woman and a man for the hours and minutes, respectively — who appear to be walking toward the center of a bridge as time passes. At the end of each 12-hour period, they meet. (The man, presumably more eager for the meeting than the demure and reticent woman, walks to the center of the bridge 12 times, i.e.,

once per hour, before the woman finally makes it there.) The case is made of white gold and is 38 mm wide. The bezel is set with diamonds. The watch is part of the company's Poetic Complications series, in which complicated movements are used to animate entertaining vignettes or events in nature.

Van Cleef's new models also include a set of five watches whose mosaic-like dials, made of semiprecious stones, mother-of-pearl and enamel, depict different California vistas. The set is named **Midnight Extraordinary Landscapes** (\$495,000). The watches all contain Piaget's self-winding 800P caliber. Their white gold cases are 42 mm in diameter. Van Cleef will manufacture eight sets.

The Le Pont des Amoureux



Two watches from the Midnight Extraordinary Landscapes collection



Richard Mille

THE NEW TOURBILLON watch from Richard Mille, the **RM 017**, is a study in slimness: the case is just 8.7 mm at its thickest part and the movement is only 4.65 mm. Not too surprisingly, Mille named the watch the **Ultra Thin Tourbillon**. The watch has several other unusual features (not to mention its price, about \$300,000). The watch's baseplate, for instance, is made of carbon nanofiber, a material that the company first tested several years ago and now uses in all its tourbillon models. Carbon nanofiber is extremely rigid, chemically stable and unaffected by extreme temperatures. The watch has a function selector, operated through a pusher in the center of the crown. With it, the wearer can choose winding or setting modes (there is a special speed-setting mode that lets you change the hour quickly for when you travel to a different time zone). A turning display at 3 o'clock indicates which mode you're in, showing a "W" for winding, an "N" for neutral, an "H" for hand-setting and an "S" for speed-setting. The watch is just under 50 mm long and 38 mm wide.

Richard Mille has also launched a new divers' watch, the **RM 028**, following up on his very first divers' watch, the RM 025 tourbillon chronograph, introduced a year ago. The RM 028 contains a skeletonized, automatic, double-barrel movement, the RMA57, whose rotor is equipped with what Mille calls "variable geometry." That means that it can be adjusted to wind the movement at a speed that suits the wearer's level of activity. If he moves his arms a great deal, he needs slower winding, and if he's relatively stationary, faster winding. Adjustments are made by moving two gold, pie-shaped segments in the rotor into one of six positions. The case, which is water-resistant to 300 meters, is made of titanium and 47 mm in diameter. The bezel rotates in one direction only. Price: \$79,000.



The RM 017 Ultra Thin Tourbillon



The RM 028 has an adjustable winding rotor for different winding speeds.



The RM 028 divers' watch

Greubel Forsey

THIS ARTISAN BRAND founded by Frenchman Robert Greubel and Brit Stephen Forsey has unveiled its third “Invention” watch, an extremely limited series of 11 pieces each in rose gold, white gold and platinum. Its most dramatic feature is its tourbillon cage, inclined at a 25-degree angle at the 8 o’clock position, which rotates on its axis once every 24 seconds. It also has a decidedly unconventional method of showing the time: the hour and minute displays are on two concentric disks. A red pointer indicates the hours on the outer 24-hour display, while a blue pointer indicates the minutes on the interior disk. Another red pointer indicates the power reserve, displayed in a semicircular display at 2 o’clock. A small subdial at 5 o’clock shows the seconds. A message from the founders is engraved on a plate beneath the layered dials (though you’ll need a loupe, and possibly a French translator, to read it). The tourbillon movement can be seen through the sapphire caseback and also through another sapphire aperture on the tourbillon side of the case. Prices are \$430,000 for rose or white gold and \$450,000 for platinum.

The same invention — the tourbillon cage inclined at 25 degrees and rotating once every 24 seconds — is at the heart of Greubel Forsey’s **Tourbillon 24 Secondes Incliné** model. Because the high-velocity rotation of the cage requires a great deal of energy, it was important to reduce the weight of the most vital moving parts. Thus, Greubel Forsey used extremely low-density materials common in the aeronautical and aerospace industries, including Avional and titanium, which are two to three times lighter than steel, to produce an 88-piece tourbillon system weighing only .39 grams. The tourbillon window is at 8 o’clock, with small seconds in a semicircular indicator at 6 o’clock. A 72-hour power reserve indicator is at 3 o’clock. The watch is available in rose gold or white gold (\$300,000) or platinum (\$340,000).



Invention Piece 3



*The
Tourbillon
24 Secondes
Incliné*



I Parmigiani Fleurier

THE BUGATTI ATALANTE, named after the famous 1930s sports car, is Parmigiani's first flyback chronograph. It contains the self-winding Caliber PF 335, which is based on the brand's in-house chronograph Caliber PF 334. The case and dial design make several allusions to sports cars and racing: the side of the case between the chrono pushers has a satin-finished rectangle that resembles the air intakes on the side wings of sports cars; the barred pattern on the dial is meant to look like a Bugatti radiator grille. The positioning of the chrono pushers on the left side of the case makes them easy to push with the thumb when the wearer is racing. The initials "EB" at the bottom of

the dial are those of Bugatti founder Ettore Bugatti. The watch has an unusual feature: two tachymeter scales. The one on the bezel is for measuring high speeds, like that of a racing car, and the one on the 30-minute counter, on the right side of the dial, is for measuring lower speeds, like those of a runner or walker. Caliber 335 has two barrels and a power reserve of 50 hours. Its frequency is 28,800 vph. The watch's case is 43 mm in diameter, 13.4 mm thick and water-resistant to 30 meters. The caseback is transparent. The rose-gold model shown here is \$59,500 and a platinum version is \$93,000. The watch also comes in women's diamond versions.

2,000M

HAND MADE IN GERMANY

Specifications Conforming to DIN
(Deutsches Institut für Normung)

Model: 2,000M Professional Diver

Material: Stainless Steel = 1.4404.

Finish: Brushed.

Size: 44MM Diameter X 16.5MM Height.

Depth Rating: 2,000M = 200 Bar, 6,570 ft.

Sapphire Crystal: Extra thick, A/R Coated.

Movement: Genuine ETA Swiss automatic movement, adjusted.

Units: Limited edition of 200 total.

Origin: Made in Germany by UTS Watches in-house case factory Munich Germany.

Bracelet: Rubber strap, Mesh Bracelet or Divers bracelet.



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JeanRichard

ZIRCONIUM, a very tough, noncorrosive metal, is used in nuclear reactors and replacement knees but hardly ever in watches. JeanRichard has chosen the road rarely taken for its **2TimeZones Zirconium**, a limited edition of 249 pieces. The gray zirconium case is set off by a black, rubber-coated bezel. The second time zone is set using the crown at 9 o'clock, which changes the city shown in the window at 6 o'clock (there is a date window right above the city aperture). That city's time is displayed in the window at 12 o'clock. The watch contains the in-house Caliber JR 1060, which has a power reserve of 48 hours. The case is 43 mm in diameter and water-resistant to 100 meters. The dial comes in gray or black and has a powder-like finish.

Girard-Perregaux

IN 1966, the Neuchâtel Observatory awarded Girard-Perregaux its Centenary Prize in honor of the company's achievements in chronometry. Forty years later, G-P introduced a collection in honor of that prize and named it "1966." Now G-P has expanded the collection with three new models, including this palladium-case one, the **Small Second Palladium**. With its stick indices and relatively small case (38 mm), it harks back to the 1960s. It contains the in-house automatic Caliber GP3300, which has a frequency of 28,800 vph. The caseback is transparent. The watch, \$12,350, is a limited edition of 199 pieces. The other new 1966 pieces are a calendar-with-moon-phase model, also in palladium (\$19,800, and also limited to 199 pieces) and a column-wheel chronograph in rose gold (\$24,000).



F.P. Journe

F.P. JOURNE'S Octa Perpetuelle, the brand's first perpetual calendar watch, was presented last May at the F.P. Journe boutique in Tokyo. This year, to coincide with that boutique's fifth anniversary, the watch, a limited edition of 99 pieces, is available exclusively there and at Journe's five other boutiques, in Paris, Geneva, Hong Kong, Beijing, and New York. The watch has a 40-mm-diameter titanium case and a gold ruthenium-coated dial.

The movement, Calibre 1300.3, is constructed in 18k rose gold and features Journe's exclusive off-center unidirectional winding rotor with self-blocking ceramic ball-bearing system. The watch indicates the date by means of a retrograde hand; the day and month (with leap year indication) are displayed in



windows. Seconds are on a subdial at 4:30. The protected pusher at 8 o'clock, used for initial setting of the month, prevents accidental resetting. The Octa Perpetuelle has a power reserve of five days; like all F.P. Journe watches, its movement is lavishly decorated with circular graining and côtes de Genève. The price is \$65,800.



INTRODUCING THE

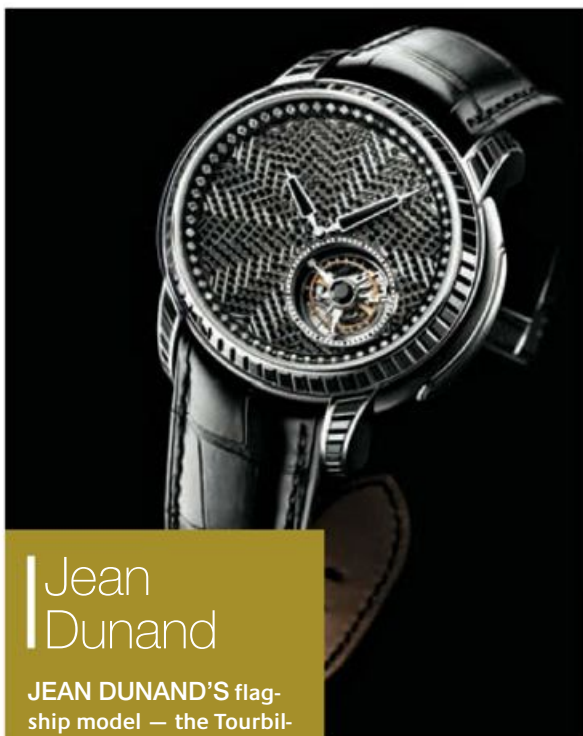
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Jean Dunand

JEAN DUNAND'S flagship model — the Tourbillon Orbital watch designed by brand co-owners Thierry Oulevay and Christophe Claret — gets the *haute joallerie* treatment this year. The Tourbillon Orbital with Black Sapphires, a unique piece in an 18k white-gold case, features a dial encrusted with 444 black sapphire stones, arranged in the Art Deco-inspired "fir tree" pattern used on Jean Dunand gold-watch casebacks. An additional 92 baguette black sapphires adorn the bezel and lugs. As with all the previous Tourbillon Orbitals, this watch features a flying tourbillon cage that rotates once per minute and orbits the dial once every 24 hours. Suggested retail is \$475,000.

Bovet

WHEN IS A wristwatch not a wristwatch? When it's been converted, by means of a couple of easy squeezes and clicks, into a pocketwatch, a table clock, or a pendant watch. Bovet has devised a system called **Amadeo** that lets the wearer transform his wristwatch by, first, squeezing the two pushers on either side of the bow at the top of the watch dial and, second, opening the caseback. These two actions release both ends of the watch strap. The watch can now be attached to a chain (which comes with the watch) or placed on a table, where, supported by the watch's caseback, it can serve as a clock. The system also allows the watch to be worn on the wrist with either side up. That way, the wearer can, when the mood strikes him, show off one of the miniature paintings Bovet puts on the backs of some of its watches. Starting this year, all the company's watches will come equipped with the Amadeo conversion system.

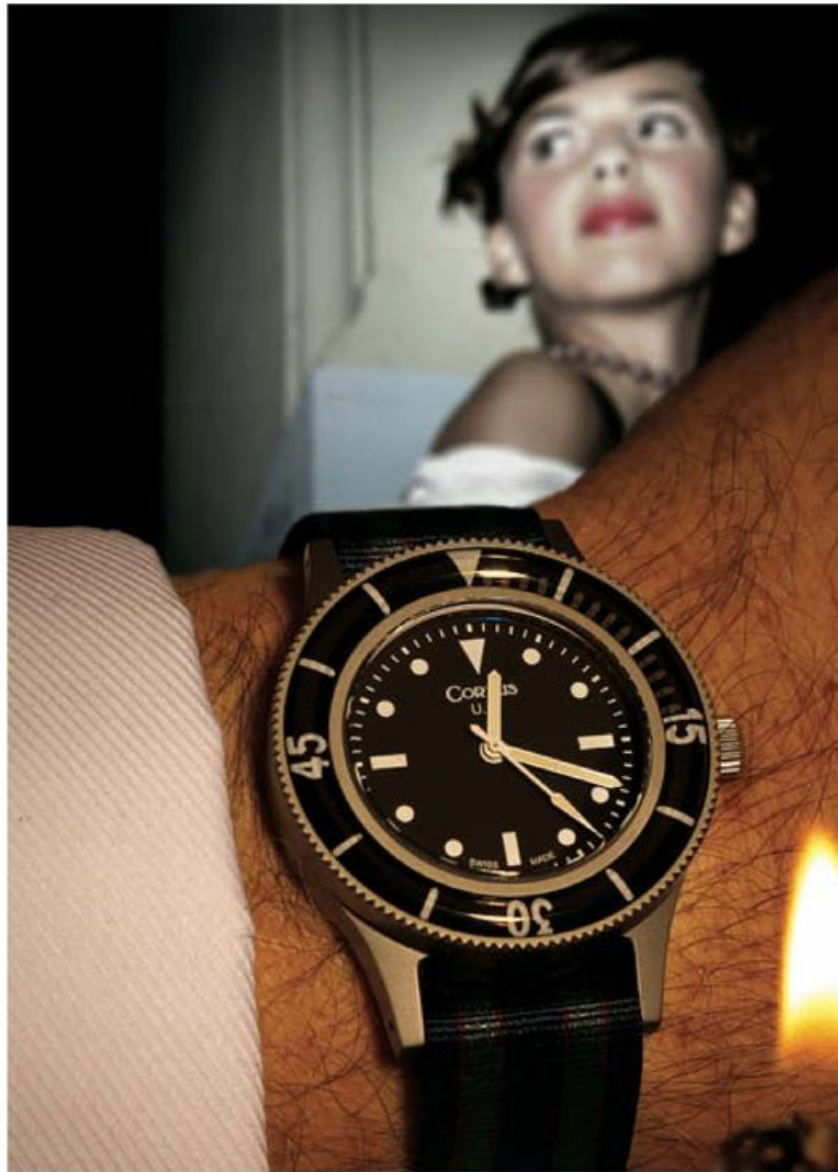
Bovet's Amadeo system converts wristwatch to pocketwatch or clock.





De Bethune

CALIBRE DB2105, the ninth original movement from De Bethune in its eight years of existence, is showcased in this watch from the revamped DB25 collection. The hand-wound movement's signature breakthrough is its balance wheel, consisting of a silicon disk surrounded by a platinum ring. Along with De Bethune's hairspring with flat terminal curve, the new balance represents the latest step in the company's quest for "perfect isochronism." The DB25 with Sky and Stars model features the trademark De Bethune three-dimensional moon-phase at 12 o'clock, set against a striking night-sky-with-stars background. To create this dial, the watchmakers pierce tiny holes in a steel sheet, enlarge them into star shapes, and then press tiny pieces of gold into the holes. Afterward, the entire sheet is polished and flame-blued to give it its color. The drum-shaped white-gold case is 44.6 mm in diameter and includes a screw-down crown and the brand's patented moveable lugs. The watch has a six-day power reserve. It sells for \$69,500. ○



NIGHT OPERATIONS

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Independents' Hall

The first Geneva Time Exhibition made its debut this year concurrently with the SIHH.

THE SALON INTERNATIONAL de Haute Horlogerie (SIHH) — which showcases luxury watch brands produced by the Richemont Group and a select handful of others — was the largest such show in Geneva during the week of January 18-22, but it was not the only one. A short distance away, Geneva's International Conference Centre was hosting the inaugural edition of the Geneva Time Exhibition, or GTE, the first watch fair devoted exclusively to independent watch brands, many of them small and lesser known.

According to the show's promoters, nearly 5,500 visitors attended the GTE, including 500 journalists. Thirty-eight watch brands exhibited their wares, and many reported receiving an encouraging number of orders from the international retailers who attended. Among the event sponsors were a number of prestigious brands — including Sotheby's, BMW, and Laurent-Perrier, who sponsored an after-show Champagne bar. The fair was successful enough that another edition — possibly with more exhibiting brands — will be held in Geneva in 2011, and the organizers also have plans to extend the GTE model to other world cities, beginning with Mumbai, India later this year.

The watch brands — many already distributed in the United States, others attending the show in search of a U.S. distributor — showed off a wide variety of models, ranging from classical to sporty to downright bizarre. Participating brands included Alain Silberstein, Badollet, BRM, Clerc, HD3, Ladoire, Linde Werdelin, Louis Moinet, Pierre DeRoche, Quinting, Ritmo Mundo, and Volna. For photos and reviews of several of the watch highlights at the GTE, go to watchtime.com/2010/02/g-t-e.

— MARK BERNARDO



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FRESHMAN SENATOR

We test Glashütte Original's new Senator Chronometer, the first watch from the German manufacture to earn an official rate certificate from the Glashütte Observatory.

BY ALEXANDER LINZ
PHOTOS BY NIK SCHÖLZEL

Glashütte Original Senator Chronometer

The German watch company Glashütte Original conceived its Senator Chronometer, which debuted at Baselworld 2009, specifically as a chronometer, a highly precise timepiece capable of earning an official chronometer certificate. But unlike most chronometers, which are certified by the Swiss testing bureau COSC, the Senator gets its chronometer certification from the Glashütte Observatory in the German watchmaking town of Glashütte.

There, each Senator Chronometer is subjected to a rate test, and must achieve the results established for chronometers by the German Industrial Standard, or DIN 8319 (see “Making the Grade in Glashütte” sidebar). Glashütte Original created a new movement expressly for this model: manual-wound Caliber 58-01. This movement is ideal for a chronometer, as is the design of the dial, which uses the distinctive arrangement of a marine chronometer with an off-center seconds hand at 6 o’clock and a power-reserve display at 12 o’clock. The power reserve, incidentally, is 45 hours. A small, circular opening in the power-reserve display serves as a day/night indicator: a white disk appears there during the day (between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.), followed by a black disk during the nighttime hours. Glashütte Original’s trademark panorama date, blued and polished *poire* (pear-shaped) hands, and a manually polished eyelet in each hand accentuate the dial’s high-quality appearance. The dial also catches the eye with its elaborate surface treatment, milled railroad-style minute circle, and milled, paint-filled Roman numerals. The *argentine grainée* (grained silver-plating) technique is used to create the surface. This process starts with the mechanical abrasion of a brass dial by spraying it with a powerful jet containing a mixture of water, chalk and wood. Afterward, a paste composed of powdered silver and water is meticulously applied by hand to the pretreated surface.

The easy-to-read panorama date display, which switches to the next date precisely at midnight, uses two coplanar numbered disks and traces its ancestry to GO’s Caliber 95. In the new caliber, it’s positioned at 3 o’clock and can be reset by operating the little corrector button in the case’s flank at 4 o’clock. The watch comes with a small, pen-like tool the owner can use to press the corrector button, but a sharp pencil or ballpoint pen will suffice.

RUN YOUR FINGERS over the neatly crafted case and you’ll find no sharp edges. The back is furnished with a pane of sapphire crystal that offers an unobstructed view of hand-wound Caliber 58-01. The movement needs no movement-holder ring because, with an impressive 35-mm diameter, it fits the case exactly. Looking at the movement, your eye is drawn to the barrel, the winding wheel with a visible planetary gear train for the power-reserve display, the three-quarters plate with gold set-

SPECS

GLASHÜTTE ORIGINAL SENATOR CHRONOMETER

Manufacturer: Glashütte Original GmbH, Glashütte/Saxony, Altenberger Strasse 1, D-01768 Glashütte, Germany

Reference number: 58.01.01.01.04

Series number: 0024

Functions: Hours, minutes, small seconds, power-reserve display, day/night indicator, large date, stop-seconds function

Movement: Caliber 58-01, manual-wind; 58 jewels; Swiss lever escapement; screw balance; Breguet balance spring from Precision Engineering AG; 28,800 vph; Incabloc shock absorption, angle of lift = 53°; swan’s neck fine adjustment mechanism; one-barrel, 45-hour power reserve; 357 components; diameter = 35 mm, height = 6.47 mm

Case: Massive, tripartite rose-gold case; caseback held in place by five screws; pane of sapphire in back; hand-setting via crown; corrector button; sapphire crystal is nonreflective on both surfaces; water-resistant to 50 meters

Strap and clasp: Alligator strap with polished and satin-finished, double-folding rose-gold clasp

Rate results:

(fully wound, half wound; deviations in seconds per day)

Dial up	+1	+2
Dial down	0	0
Crown up	0	-1
Crown down	0	+2
Crown left	-1	0
Crown right	0	0
Greatest deviation of rate	2	3
Average deviation	0	+0.5
Average amplitude		

Flat positions 303° 283°

Hanging positions 277° 258°

Dimensions: Diameter = 42 mm, height = 12.3 mm, weight = 164 grams

Price: \$26,900 (rose gold), \$28,000 (white gold)



The most eye-catching features of Caliber 58-01 include its hand-engraved balance cock, its barrel and its winding wheel with visible planetary gear train for the power-reserve display.

SCORES

GLASHÜTTE ORIGINAL SENATOR CHRONOMETER

Strap and clasp (max. 10 points): Fine, beautifully crafted, alligator strap with large scales. The double-folding clasp is somewhat clumsy to operate. **8**

Operation (5): Thanks to the zero-reset mechanism for the seconds hand, it is easy to set the exact time with to-the-second accuracy. The minute hand is always perfectly positioned opposite the corresponding index. The panorama date display can be reset by pressing a button in the case's flank. **5**

Case (10): Massive, very well crafted case with the classic "Senator" look **10**

Design (15): This watch will appeal to aesthetes and to those who are fanatical about precision. It represents a modern adaptation of historic chronometer dials. **15**

Legibility (5): The panorama date and the ideal contrast between the dark blued hands and pale dial ensure problem-free reading of the date and time, even when the lighting is dim. The dial has no luminous material. **4**

Wearing comfort (10): A large but not overly thick watch, it fits well around the wrist. **9**

Movement (20): The newly developed, hand-wound Caliber 58-01 with exclusive zero-reset function for the seconds hand (patent pending) is exquisitely crafted in the grand tradition of Glashütte's masterpiece watches and pocket chronometers. **18**

Rate results (10): Nearly perfect: scarcely any deviations from zero when fully wound, and the rate performance is only slightly less accurate when the watch is half-wound. **10**

Overall value (15): This watch has earned an official rate certificate from the German Calibrating Service (DKD). With a retail price of \$26,900 for the rose-gold version, it isn't exactly a bargain, but it's surely a wise addition to a serious watch collection. **13**

TOTAL: 92 POINTS

SETTING THE TIME IS VERY CONVENIENT: THE SECONDS HAND RUSHES TO ZERO AND THE MINUTE HAND MOVES TO THE NEAREST INDEX.

tings, and the hand-engraved balance cock. All of these details are typical of the masterfully crafted Glashütte timepieces of yesteryear, particularly the lever chronometers and pocket chronometers from the era of Alfred Helwig, the celebrated Glashütte watchmaker (1886 to 1974) whose accomplishments include inventing the flying tourbillon.

So, is everything truly perfect? Very nearly, but not quite. The massive double-folding clasp is made of solid gold, and even offers the option of changing the length of the strap, but it is very difficult to operate. After we closed the shorter half with the two loops, we tried to close the larger half, but the shorter part kept springing open. As a result, we spent more time fumbling with the closure than we would have liked. A simple folding clasp would have been a better solution here.

PRECISION IS THE principal theme of the Senator Chronometer, and not only in its rate behavior. The designers and engineers who created Caliber 58-01 pursued new paths, even for the time-setting mechanisms. A novel feature of this caliber is its zero-return seconds hand. When the crown is pulled out into its first (and only) extracted position to set the time, the hour hand instantly stops and the seconds hand races to its zero position, where it remains motionless. Meanwhile, the minute hand advances or retreats to the nearest full-minute index. When one turns the crown to set the time, the minute hand moves in single-minute increments. This prevents it from coming to rest between two adjacent minute indices while the seconds hand is immobile at the "60." This detail of the construction makes it quick and easy to synchronize this watch with a time signal. Simply pull the crown out, wait for the time signal to announce the nearest full minute, and press the crown in again, and the Senator Chronometer is perfectly synchronized. Setting an ordinary mechanical watch is downright complicated in comparison. Usually, you must wait patiently until the seconds hand has come around to its zero position, quickly pull out the crown, reset the minute hand so its tip points exactly to the next minute index, wait for the time signal to announce the next full minute, and press the crown back in. Glashütte's watch accomplishes this maneuver in a significantly simpler manner.

But how does this mechanism work? The diagram on page 98 depicts the zero-reset mechanism as it looks after the crown has been pulled out. In an ordinary three-handed watch, the exact time is set by turning the crown, which acts through intermediate wheels to turn the cannon pinion. The cannon pinion is



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TEST

Glashütte Original Senator Chronometer

always engaged with the hour wheel through an alternator wheel. As a result, the hour shown on the watch is always in accord with the minute: for example, when the minute hand indicates that 45 minutes have passed since the last full hour, the hour hand will have completed three-quarters of its passage from one hour index to the next. However, no such coupling connects the seconds hand with the minute hand. When the cannon pinion is manually turned, the frictional connection is lost, along with the cannon pinion's synchrony with the seconds display. This means that the minute hand could be pointing between two adjacent minute indices, even if the seconds hand is pointing directly toward its zero mark.

Glashütte Original's solution ensures that the tip of the minute hand is always perfectly tangent to a minute index whenever the seconds hand is in its zero position. Rather than relying on a conventional friction-fit minutes hand, the Senator Chronometer's minute wheel is connected to the minute staff by a snap-in ring that meshes with two snap-in pawls. These are arranged so that the snap-in ring, which permits 60 snap-in posi-

THIS WATCH DOES HONOR TO THE TRADITION OF THE CHRONOMETER. DURING OUR RATE TEST, IT SCARCELY DEVIATED FROM PERFECT TIMEKEEPING IN ANY POSITION.

Power-reserve display at 12 o'clock, small seconds at 6 o'clock: the dial is designed in the style of antique marine chronometers. Blued poire hands with polished centers and a big-date display complete the picture.



Pros

- + Chronometer with official rate certificate according to German industrial standard DIN 8319
- + Beautifully made *manuf-acture* movement
- + The brand's own exclusive zero-return mechanism for the seconds hand
- + Easy to set the time with absolute precision
- + Very well adjusted

Cons

- The double-folding clasp is somewhat difficult to operate.

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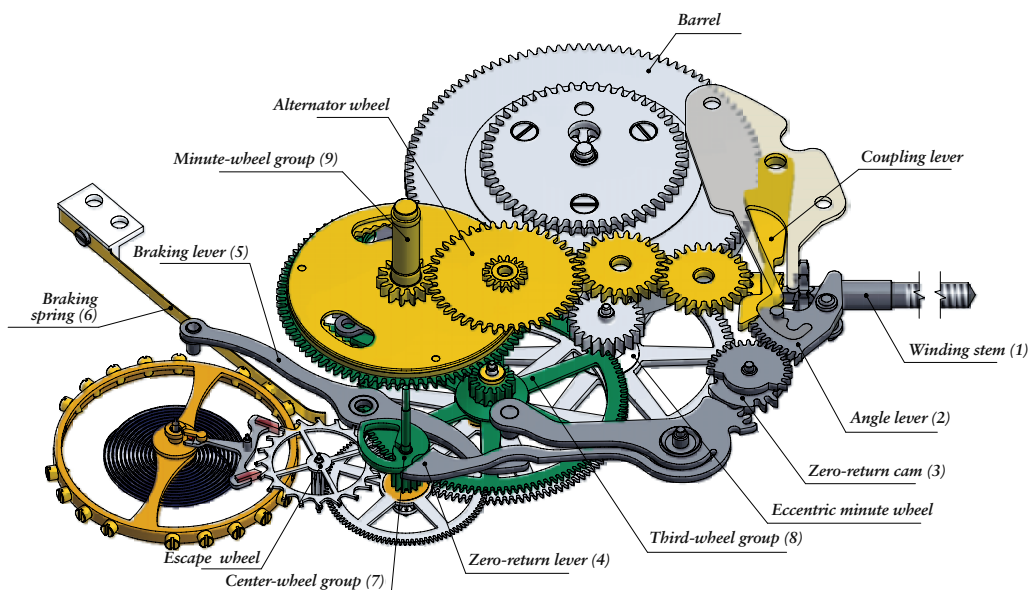
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Making the Grade in Glashütte

The Swiss chronometer-testing bureau COSC (Contrôle officiel suisse des chronomètres) will only certify Swiss watches; those made in other countries must seek their chronometer bona fides elsewhere. That's why the German watch-and-jewelry company Wempe, based in Hamburg, set up a German chronometer-testing bureau four years ago. It's housed in a renovated, century-old celestial observatory on a hill overlooking the watch-making town of Glashütte. Wempe's own chronometers are certified there, as are those of other German brands.

The tests are conducted by an independent entity: the DKD-K-09801 calibrating laboratory of the German Calibrating Service (DKD), the chronometer-testing branch of the Office of Weights and Measures of the State of Thuringia, in cooperation with the Saxon State Office of Weights and Measures in Glashütte. The requirements are those set for chronometers in standard 8319 by the German organization for standardization DIN (Deutsches Institut für Normung). DIN is a member of ISO (International Organization of Standardization).

Like COSC, the DKD tests watches in five positions and three temperatures (23°, 8° and 38°) for a total of 15 days. The timing requirements are essentially the same as for COSC: the average daily deviation must lie between minus-four and plus-six seconds; the mean variation must be two seconds or less and the greatest variation five seconds or less. But unlike COSC, which tests movements uncased, the DKD tests the entire watch. Another special feature of the German test is that only watches that can be set to the nearest second are eligible for certification.



The zero-return mechanism when the crown has been pulled out to set the time. The movement is stopped.

tions, is always within the flow of force and thus always correctly set. The minute-wheel group (9) is propelled by a doubled third-wheel pinion in the third-wheel group (8). A frictional coupling by means of an expanding spring or plate spring connects one part of the third-wheel group with the minute-wheel group, and connects its other part with the flow of force of the gear train. The part that's in the flow of force conveys this power through a pinion to the similarly doubled center-wheel group (7). The center-wheel group is partly in the flow of force of the gear train, closer to the escape wheel. The other part is coupled, along with the third-wheel group, to the minute-wheel group. Both parts of the center-wheel group are also connected by a frictional coupling. The part of the center-wheel group that's coupled with the minute hand takes care of the seconds display (the staff of the seconds hand) and bears a zero-return heart. When the crown is pressed in, a toothed angle lever (2) holds a zero-return cam (3), which holds the zero-return lever (4), preventing it from meshing with the zero-return heart of the center-wheel group. When the crown is pulled out, the toothed angle lever turns the zero-return cam, which then uses teeth to press the zero-return lever against the seconds heart, thus moving the staff of the seconds hand and the seconds hand to the zero position and keeping them motionless there. Simultaneously, shortly before the zero-return lever reaches the effective range of the seconds heart, the zero-return lever releases a braking lever (5), which releases a braking spring



The solid gold clasp displays high-quality craftsmanship, but makes it somewhat clumsy to fasten the watch to the wrist.

(6), which stops the balance's oscillations and thus the movement. The zero-return stop-seconds mechanism holds the minute-wheel group in the lower part via the third-wheel group.

WHEN YOU TURN the crown to set the time, the minute cannon moves through precisely spaced clicks along the minute wheel, and the minutes can be set in full increments. Thanks to the springy design of the zero-return lever, only one force acts on the zero-return heart through the elastic element. However, this must be adjusted so that the zero-return of the seconds hand functions reliably and without damaging the fourth-wheel group. The specially arranged teeth between the zero-return cam and the zero-return lever prevent the torque (which accumulates in the zero-return lever because of the spring's force) from being conveyed to the angle lever. You can now turn the winding stem (1) by means of the crown, to set the time without the stem automatically pulling itself inward. Press the crown, and thus the winding stem, back into its resting position and the angle lever moves the zero-return cam. The teeth mesh between the zero-return cam and the zero-return lever, returning the latter to its starting position. The zero-return lever then releases the seconds heart on the center-wheel group; at the same time, the zero-return lever returns the braking lever to its resting position and guides the braking spring away from the balance so that the latter is released and the movement resumes running.

The doubled third-wheel group and the doubled center-wheel group help the seconds hand and minute hand resume motion instantaneously and without play.

The Senator Chronometer performed extremely well in the rate test. The electronic Witschi timing machine recorded barely any deviations in each of the six tested positions. The watch lost one second in the "crown left" position and gained one second in the "dial up" position. It achieved perfect values of "zero" in the other four positions. We also tested this timepiece's accuracy when its barrel was only half wound, which resulted in a maximum gain of two seconds in two positions and a loss of one second in another position, as well as a perfect score of "zero" in the three remaining positions. Credit for these outstanding results is certainly due to the low-friction design of the entire gear-train group, as well as to the use of a large screw balance and a Breguet balance spring, provided to Glashütte Original by the Swiss company Precision Engineering Group AG, a subsidiary of the Moser Group AG in Neuhausen am Rheinfall, right next to Schaffhausen. The Senator Chronometer performed with extraordinary accuracy in the wrist test as well — nearly as good as a quartz watch. Moreover, the precise interaction between the minute hand and seconds hands testifies to the extreme meticulousness with which the dial is manufactured, the hands are installed, and the entire mechanism of 357 individual parts is designed, produced, assembled and finely adjusted. ○

Man

of

Whether he's putting them on the block for Antiquorum or appraising them on TV for "Antiques Roadshow," Charles Tearle lives and breathes vintage watches.

BY MARK BERNARDO

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL KATCHEN

Auction



*I*t was a television moment to make the most ardent vintage-watch connoisseur's jaw drop. On a February 2008 episode of PBS's "Antiques Roadshow," filmed in San Antonio, a gray-haired gentleman with an easy Texas drawl brings a gold pocketwatch to be appraised. The watch, once owned by his great-grandfather, has a relatively innocuous "Spaulding & Co." inscription on the dial. The owner mentions that he has had it in a safe ever since he broke its crystal years ago, while wearing it to — of all things — play football. The appraiser, a dapper Brit named Charles Tearle, studies the timepiece and in a matter of moments reveals, to both the owner and the TV audience, its prestigious origins. "It wasn't actually made by Spaulding & Co.," he says. "They were just the retailers of it. This watch

was made by Patek Philippe, circa 1900." Not only is the watch from Patek Philippe (whom Tearle assures the man is "a very famous Swiss watch manufacturer"); it is an extremely rare model with both a minute repeater and a split-seconds chronograph. After succinctly explaining both functions, Tearle estimates the piece could fetch at least \$20,000 on the auction market. (A hypothetical Patek wristwatch with the same complications might go for hundreds of thousands more.)

"I wouldn't play football with it again," Tearle says, flashing a smile.

"No, I don't think so," the owner responds, dollar signs undoubtedly dancing in his head. (You can view this exchange, and others, by searching the "Video Archive" at the program's Web site, www.pbs.org/wgbh/roadshow.)



By his teens, Tearle had become known among his relatives and school friends as “that guy who loves watches,” accumulating a respectable collection based more on aesthetic tastes than mechanical fascination. The moment when hobby became obsession — and the world of high-end mechanical watches opened up for him — occurred while Tearle was watching *Live and Let Die*, Roger Moore’s first James Bond film and the one that introduced the budding watch connoisseur to Rolex. “It was the first film where the watch was given a prominent role. There was a close-up where Bond rotates the bezel to make it

A man with dark hair, wearing a light blue striped shirt, is focused on inspecting a small watch component using a magnifying glass. He is holding the component with his fingers. On the green surface in front of him, several other watches are laid out, including a Rolex with a metal bracelet and a Patek Philippe with a leather strap. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a workshop or a display area.



The humble quartz watch that started a lifelong timepiece obsession: Tearle's battered Timex digital chronograph

magnetic, and when I saw that I was like, 'Dad, Dad, that's the watch I want!' He said, 'Son, you've got to work really hard to get a watch like that.' So that was it. I was going to work really hard and get that watch. I knew fairly early on that this was what I wanted to do. And I simply never looked back." Today, Tearle owns (and wears) a version of the watch Moore wore in that film, a vintage Rolex 5513 Oyster Perpetual Submariner.

Tearle made it to age 16 before he decided it was time to start his career in earnest. The precocious youngster answered a newspaper ad placed by a London jewelry shop that was considering an expansion into international wristwatch sales. He bought a suit, interviewed with

that now-forgotten jeweler, and spent the rest of the day visiting other prospective employers, including Watches of Switzerland, the U.K.'s equivalent to Tourneau. "Hi, I'm Charles Tearle, I love watches, and I would love to have a job," he recalls as his refrain. "That was pretty much what I did all day." He ultimately ended up at Somlo Antiques, the famous Piccadilly antique dealership owned by George Somlo.

One of the world's most renowned vintage-watch experts, and today proprietor of Omega's first vintage watch shop in London, Somlo took a shine to the ambitious young man and hired him soon after their initial meeting, in August 1990. What followed for Tearle was a dozen years of education and experience in his chosen field — learning the ins and outs of classic timepieces from the in-house experts who repaired and restored them, and absorbing business acumen, and an eye for value, from Somlo himself. When vintage wristwatches began to develop from a curiosity into a full-blown collectors' category in the 1990s, Tearle made a point of immersing himself in knowledge, devouring auction catalogs and memorizing every book on the subject he could find in those pre-Internet days. "It started out small," he says of the now burgeoning wristwatch market. "No one believed that wristwatches, which were so relatively young, could become so valuable. Before that, it had always been pocketwatches."

Somlo, his mentor, became one of two people that Tearle cites today as having the most significant influence on his career. The other was his immediate superior at Somlo Antiques, a young, British, aspiring watchmaker named Peter Speake-Marin. "Peter was my boss when I was 16," Tearle reveals. "He taught me so much about the technical aspects of watches. He would also go on about how much he wanted to make his own, and I have such a huge respect for him today because when I look at his watches, I can see that he really did incorporate some of his ideas from back then into them." Asked if he ever considered following in the footsteps of Speake-Marin — today a



"IF SOMEONE BRINGS ME A WATCH THAT HE KNOWS IS WORTH \$10,000, THAT'S NOT VERY INTERESTING. IF HE HAS NO IDEA OF ITS VALUE, THAT'S EXCITING FOR THE AUDIENCE."

Roger Moore, as James Bond, wore a version of this Rolex Submariner in *Live and Let Die*, the film that inspired Tearle to pursue a career in watches.



successful independent watchmaker — as a career, Tearle says, “Peter actually did try to get me into watchmaking at one point. But it is phenomenally hard. I think most people don’t appreciate the mindset and the dexterity required. I know the theory behind them, I know how they work, but making watches was never my calling. I can take them apart; I just can’t put them back together.”

IN LATE 2001, Tearle decided to take a sabbatical to travel the world. “I originally wanted to take a year off, away from the industry, and see if this is still the business I wanted to be in,” he says. “That one year turned into three.” In those three years, he racked up enough exotic adventures to impress perhaps even his childhood idol, James Bond — skiing in Whistler, driving across Australia, island-hopping through the Caribbean, exploring Mongolia, China, and Russia. Even then, while he was not specifically seeking out exotic timepieces, they seemed many times to find him. Then, in 2004, while on a kayaking trip in Canada, he realized not only that he wanted to get back to work in the business he loved: he wanted to achieve something new, outside of his familiar London environs, specifically in the United States. After a three-month stretch of being cut off from the outside world, he sent a letter offering his services in such a venture to Bonhams, in London, a British auction house devoted to fine art and antiques, and the only such company, Tearle knew, that did not have a watch department in America. Then, serendipity reared its head: Bonhams had recently run a newspaper ad for the job that Tearle, out of the blue, was pitching

for — a position that he did not even know existed. Bonhams hired him, but with one catch. “I told them my interest was not in staying in London but in opening a California office,” Tearle says. “They said, ‘Prove yourself in London, prove you’re capable of opening such an office, and we’ll give you that position.’ Well, that next year, 2005, was the most successful year that Bonhams’ watch and clock department had in 20 years.”

True to their word, Tearle’s superiors at Bonhams sent him first to Bonhams & Butterfields, its main U.S. office in San Francisco (which he describes as a great city but a little “quieter” than a Londoner is used to), then to Los Angeles, where he found the fast-paced lifestyle more to his liking and quickly adjusted to his new position. He also very swiftly and decisively made his mark on the U.S. watch-auction market. One of the first vintage pieces he came across was a World War II-era gold Cartier Cintree (now known more commonly as a Tank Américain) owned by an elderly woman in the town of Carmel. She had bought it in Paris in the late 1940s and placed it in a safe, where it had remained ever since. After speaking to the woman on the phone, Tearle made the scenic two-hour drive to Carmel from San Francisco, and in her living room gingerly opened up the watch to find a vintage European Watch & Clock Co. movement. “I valued that watch at \$25,000 and it sold for \$115,000,” he says. “It was our first sale in America.” It was also the beginning of a very successful run for Tearle with Bonhams, wherein its newly established watch department grew steadily.

By the summer of 2008, however, Tearle had grown dissatisfied with his position: a series of structural changes at Bonhams had precipitated his decision to resign. With no immediate future plans, Tearle once again found himself touched

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Antiquorum's Charles Tearle



Photo: Jeff Dunn for "Antiques Roadshow"

Before the cameras roll, Tearle (center) prepares to film a scene of PBS's "Antiques Roadshow."

by serendipity. "Literally on the day I had decided to resign, William Rohr from Antiquorum phones me up and says, 'We've been looking at you for awhile; we'd like to open a California office and you seem like the right guy to start it. What do you think?'"

It was almost inevitable that someone with Tearle's knowledge of, and passion for, antique timepieces would end up at Antiquorum Auctioneers. Founded in Geneva in 1974, and today with offices in New York, London, Paris, Hong Kong, and other world cities, it is a house dedicated to serving the exclusive niche that is the wristwatch collectors' market, selling significant models from brands such as Rolex, Patek Philippe, Cartier, Omega and Vacheron Constantin for often record prices. Of the 62 watches that have sold at auction for more than one million Swiss francs, Antiquorum lays claim to an impressive 44. To Tearle, it was the Promised Land. "I've always aspired to work for

Antiquorum. I think anybody who's been in this industry for a long time aspires to work at Antiquorum, because it is at the top of its field." Tearle worked in Antiquorum's L.A. office for about a year and eventually also took on responsibility for the firm's London outpost. Ultimately, the frequent travel led Antiquorum to ask Tearle to relocate to its U.S. headquarters in New York City, a central hub between London and L.A., where he has been based since December 2009.

BEFORE JOINING Antiquorum, however, Tearle was approached to play a slightly less familiar role: that of television personality. The American version of "Antiques Roadshow" — based on a British series that began airing in 1979 — debuted on PBS in 1997 and developed a loyal following with its popular formula of expert antiques appraisers traveling to U.S. cities, where everyday folks can bring their heirlooms and keepsakes to

find out from the experts if they are trash or treasure. One of the show's producers had noticed his work while at Bonhams and in 2007 offered him the opportunity to take his eye for fine watches on the road. Tearle accepted and today, in addition to his globe-hopping for Antiquorum, travels to various U.S. destinations for "Roadshow." And while each finished episode is only one hour long, a great deal of time and patience goes into creating it. "It's hard," Tearle admits. "It's a 12-hour day, and you see a new person every two minutes. You don't stop talking. I literally lose my voice two or three times. And you are likely to see the same watch again and again — people wait for three hours just to show you their grandmother's Elgin pocketwatch. [Most of the time,] it's one of millions, worth about \$50, but you don't want anyone to go away disappointed, and everyone wants to tell a story. Then someone turns up with something very valuable that they think is only worth \$100. I have to go to the producers, who then may decide to film it — meanwhile the line of people with Elgins and such is growing — and suddenly I put on a mike, sit down, and it's like, 'you're on TV!'"

Tearle says that out of a line of 100 people, one of them might have a very valuable watch. And sometimes it is the story behind it, more than the value, which interests both the viewing audience and him. "You want it to be something TV-worthy. You want a reaction," he says. "If someone brings me a watch that I value at \$10,000 and he knows it's worth \$10,000, that's not very interesting to watch. When it's an icon, or something inherited that the person has no idea of its value, that's exciting for the audience and for the person."

Needless to say, the satisfaction in unearthing hidden horological gems is exciting to Tearle himself, as well. Vintage watches — much more so than modern ones — are his first love, though he cites Richard Mille, F.P. Journe, and his old friend Speake-Marin as among today's most innovative independent watch entrepreneurs, and whose products have the potential to retain value. He approves of the recent trend of long-established watch

brands re-releasing their classic models for a modern audience, like Jaeger-LeCoultre's limited-edition Polaris divers' alarm watch, which updated technology has made more "useable" than the larger, more fragile vintage one. But he cautions any watch aficionado who makes his purchase decisions based solely on what might go up in value. "The reason Patek Philippe has been such a blue-chip company for so long, and one of the reasons why even its modern watches have held such great value, is that it hasn't changed. The quality of 50 years ago is still the quality of today. Does that mean you should buy a new Patek and put it in a safe? If Patek can maintain that level of quality, yes. If something changed, that watch might not have as much value. I love the Audemars Piguet Offshore, but at such a high price, is it really going to hold value or is it likely to get damaged and depreciate, especially if you wear it? You shouldn't buy any modern watch based solely on it being an investment."

Tearle remains an avid collector himself, though he is reluctant to name specific pieces, as he's been known to sell and trade many of them. Suffice it to say that he is a fan of Patek Philippe, Cartier, and 1970s vintage sports watches, particularly Rolex. Among his "everyday" watches is a 1973 Rolex Submariner given him by George Somlo, and he has recently been sporting a Rolex 6263 Daytona and a rare Omega Speedmaster model with an orange chronograph hand. And, yes, he still has that digital Timex from his childhood — the modest timepiece that started him on his lifelong career path — tucked away in a drawer.

His passion for his vocation remains undiminished. Speaking about his "Antiques Roadshow" experiences, he says, "I can see a thousand people with Elgins and I'll still think, 'Well, what does the person behind him have?' Someone will pull out something phenomenal and your day is made. That's what we do this for, basically. If most people saw Granddad's steel watch in a drawer, they wouldn't think it's so valuable. But that's one of the great things about the vintage watch market: undiscovered ones are still out there, and they're still turning up." ○

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Carlos Rosillo

Building Bell & Ross

How two French guys named Bruno and Carlos adopted the American entrepreneurial spirit — and an American-sounding name — to create a watch company.

BY JOE THOMPSON

I

n 1982, 17-year-old Bruno Belamich moved from his hometown in the Burgundy region of France to Paris to attend a college-preparatory high school. There he met 17-year-old Carlos Rosillo, Paris-born and bred. They became buddies. They were not two peas in a pod, more like a study in contrasts. Bruno was creative, artistic, destined for a career in design. Carlos was practical, analytical, with a good head for figures, destined for a career in banking. One thing they had in common was watches. Bruno loved the LED and LCD digital watches that burst onto the scene in his early teens;

Carlos liked classical vintage pieces.

The lads went on to university and followed their career paths. Carlos got an MBA, worked for a consulting firm, and then joined an investment bank. Bruno studied at the Société Française d'Innovation Industrielle, a top industrial design school. They didn't know it at the time, but their true destiny



Bell & Ross's first bit was its Classic Pilot's watch of 1994.



was to become watch entrepreneurs. Belamich and Rosillo are in fact the Bell (from Belamich) and Ross (from Rosillo) who founded the firm of the same name in Paris in 1994.

That the name has a decidedly American ring is no coincidence. These two Frenchmen are Americanophiles. Belamich is a devotee of American product design of the Forties and Fifties and Rosillo is a fan of America's entrepreneurial business culture. Indeed, despite the French setting, there is a very American, Horatio Alger aspect to their story. In the past few years, Bell & Ross has become a hot brand on the strength of its Instrument collection, whose leader model, the BR 01 Instrument, debuted in 2005. But it wasn't always so. Their labor of love, now in its 16th year, flew below the watch world's radar for years and suffered a couple of identity crises before its dramatic mid-decade rebirth.

I. THE PROJECT

Bell & Ross began as Bruno Belamich's design school graduation project. The five-year program required students to do an internship and a major design project — the equivalent of a thesis — to graduate. Belamich interned with the Sinn watch company of Frankfurt, Germany. He loved the design of Sinn watches, which he first saw in a Japanese watch magazine. Sinn, founded by German pilot and flight instructor Helmut Sinn in 1956, specializes in pilots' watches. "I was automatically attracted to its clean design, which mimicked the instrument panel of an airplane," Belamich says of the typical Sinn dial. "I love black industrial objects and at that time [1992] there weren't many [watches] with a black dial or bracelet. I looked up Mr. Sinn and he took me on as an unpaid intern."

During the Sinn internship, Belamich decided that for his graduation thesis he would create a watch brand, designing the watches, a logo, the works. He told his friend Carlos, then working as an investment banker in Paris, about the project. As the project evolved, Carlos got involved, and the two friends hatched the idea to actually produce the watches Bruno was designing. They needed a brand name; Bruno suggested Bell & Ross, an American-sounding contraction of their surnames. Carlos loved the idea, but, typically, wanted to explore all options. They spent another three months coming up with 120 names for the brand; none was better than Bruno's original idea. What sealed the deal for Carlos was the logo Bruno designed; Carlos considered it a design masterpiece. "The logo symbolizes the watch," he explains. The capital "B" looks like a watch buckle, the ampersand in a circle represents the watch face, flanked by the names, which represent the strap. "What Bruno wanted was to integrate the symbol of the company, the ampersand, in the logo." Bruno also designed a collection of watches, the highlight of which was a round-cased pilots' chronograph watch.

To graduate, each student had to present the project to a jury for approval. As luck would have it, the president of the jury was the former head of the then-defunct French watch company Lip. To the shock of Bruno and Carlos, who attended the presentation as a guest, the president of the jury attacked Bruno's work. He criticized it as too commercial, violating the spirit of the de-

“YOU HAVE ZERO CHANCE OF SUCCEEDING IN THE WATCH BUSINESS,” A FRENCH WATCH CEO TOLD BELAMICH.

sign project, and charged Bruno with naiveté and arrogance for daring to think that he could design an actual watch collection. Despite the jury president’s opposition, Bruno’s project was approved. At the end of the presentation, the ex-Lip executive approached Bruno and told him hostilely, “You have zero chance of succeeding in the watch business.”

Years later, sitting in his office at Bell & Ross headquarters off Paris’s Rue Saint-Honoré, Rosillo reflects on the incident. “This kind of thing does not happen in the U.S. system,” he says. For him, a budding businessman, it was a sobering lesson. For a year he and Bruno had been seriously evaluating whether to launch Bell & Ross as a commercial enterprise. He was considering leaving his position at the bank to do it. “In the United States,” he says, “the attitude is if you fail with talent, the next time you will succeed. Entrepreneurship in France is much more difficult. At the time, I had an American girlfriend. Her father started his company in California when he was 55 years old.” Rosillo spoke to his girlfriend’s father about his pending decision. “He gave me the good common-sense advice to live your passion, believe in it.”

After the graduation, Rosillo said to his buddy, “Bruno, do we jump?” They jumped. “We said, ‘OK, let’s start to make it, to have fun in the business that we developed.’ Then I left the bank.”

II. THE CHANEL CONNECTION

They launched Bell & Ross in 1994 with the French equivalent of \$30,000. “We were 28 years old and had no experience starting a business,” Rosillo says. Helmut Sinn helped. He encouraged the fledgling entrepreneurs, financed the production of their first 500 watches and continued to produce watches for them. In turn, Belamich continued to create designs for Sinn.

But the Sinn collaboration was a two-edged sword. Because Bell & Ross and Sinn both made “tool watches” for pilots and other professionals, and because Sinn actually produced Bell & Ross watches, Bell & Ross’s identity was blurred. It seemed like a sub-brand of Sinn. The duplication of products and distribution created problems. The U.S. market was a perfect example. Sinn had a U.S. agent, a German, selling Sinn’s rugged, utilitarian watches to retailers here. Then Bell & Ross en-



Bruno Belamich



tered the market with its own U.S. agent, a Frenchman, selling similar Bell & Ross watches to retailers and telling them, correctly, that the watches were made by Sinn. Says Rosillo, “Commercially, it was quite complicated. For the consumer, it was very confusing.”

Still, Bell & Ross was launched, with the management structure that remains to this day. “It’s simple,” Rosillo says. “I manage the business and Bruno manages the creativity.”

The brand’s first hit was the pilots’ watch, which was born from Belamich’s passion for the “instrumentation” look. “This is the kind of product and design he likes,” Rosillo says. “Since he was 18 years old, he has been collecting instrument watches and instrument panel clocks.” It led to what the company calls its four design principles — precision, readability, performance and water-resistance — that define Bell & Ross’s design aesthetic and corporate image.

As the business grew, Rosillo realized he had to secure financial backing. “I was in investment banking, so I knew that a venture capitalist wouldn’t be right,” he says. “They have a short-term view and we wanted a very, very, very long-term view.” But where would he find that kind of investor? Fate intervened when an investment banker friend of Rosillo’s said he knew people who might be interested in investing in the company for the long term. He made the introduction. Rosillo and Belamich were startled to learn that the potential investors were French businessmen who, among other things, were watch collectors who knew the brand and even owned Bell & Ross watches. Moreover, the businessmen had watch-industry connections. One of them, in fact, was the chairman of the factory in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland that makes Chanel watches.

The businessmen were Alain and Gérard Wertheimer, the brothers who hold the controlling interest in the French fashion house Chanel. Their grandfather, Pierre Wertheimer, was a co-founder of Chanel in 1924 and the family has held the controlling interest ever since. The Wertheimer brothers are among the world’s richest people; their combined personal fortune is esti-

mated to exceed \$5 billion. Alain is the chairman of the board of Chanel, Gérard the chairman of Chanel S.A. in Geneva. The brothers are famously private. They own a few small non-Chanel brands and have interests in French vineyards and thoroughbred horses.

In 1997, the Wertheimers invested in Bell & Ross. In 2000, they increased their holding in the firm. (They remain minority shareholders, Rosillo says; he does not disclose the percentage of their holding.) The Wertheimers gave Belamich and Rosillo a welcome infusion of capital, but, more importantly, autonomy. Their investment enabled Bell & Ross to cut the complicated umbilical cord with Sinn. That’s because Chanel, famous for perfume and fashion, had successfully diversified into watches in 1987. In the early 1990s, Chanel acquired the La Chaux-de-Fonds watch factory G. & F. Châtelain S.A. as a wholly owned subsidiary to make Chanel watches. Gérard Wertheimer is the chairman. Châtelain, with a staff of just under 200 employees, makes cases and bracelets and assembles watches. In 1998, Chanel upgraded and expanded the Châtelain factory to 7,250 square meters. Soon all Bell & Ross watches were produced there.

The Wertheimer investment was a turning point for Bell & Ross, Rosillo says. “The Wertheimer family said, ‘It’s time for you to have autonomy. We’re going to get you the capital and give you the capacity to have real autonomy in terms of finances and in terms of production.’”

Bell & Ross entered the new century with new capital, a new link to a powerful production team, and new hope to break out of the ranks of small, niche brands.

It didn’t happen.

III. IDENTITY CRISIS

In 2000, the Internet bubble burst. Then came the 9/11 attacks and a recession in major markets. “From 2001 to 2004 were tough years,” Rosillo says. By 2004, the company’s 10th anniversary, Rosillo was worried. “Our positioning, our field of expertise was always the same,” Rosillo says. “I thought, we



1



Models from the BR 01 Instrument collection:

- 1) BR 01-93 24H GMT
- 2) The limited-edition (500 pieces)
BR 01 Instrument Phantom
- 3) The chronograph version, BR 01-94,
in rose gold and carbon case
- 4) BR 01-92 Orange

2



3

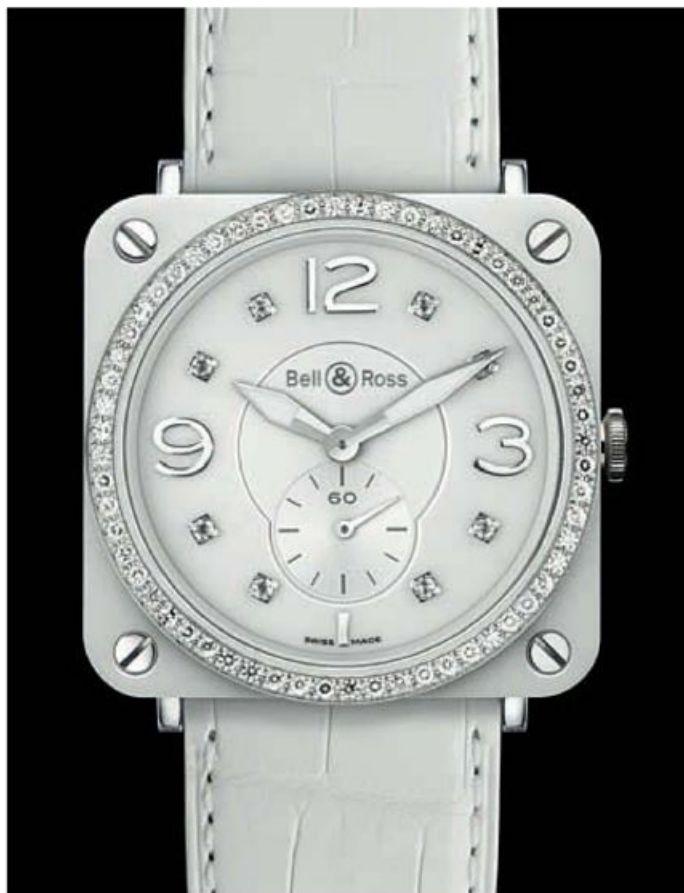


4



The BR Instrument Grand Tourbillon's features include hours, minutes, seconds, a 10-hour chronograph, a power reserve, and a tourbillon.

Bell & Ross ladies' watches, like the BR-S Phantom Instrument Ceramic, come in a 39-mm case.



have a good direction but in this market crisis, something is missing.” The problem was that by then their star item had become an industry staple: everybody and their mother had a pilots’ watch that looked more or less like theirs. While they had a range of models in various collections (Professional, Vintage, Classic, etc.), they had lost their hero model and their identity.

Rosillo knew that only one person could solve the company’s identity crisis: Bruno. So he had a heart-to-heart meeting with his partner about the future of the firm. Rosillo told him that they needed to rediscover and redefine their beloved brand and that it had to start with him. He challenged and coaxed his friend to use his formidable design skills to fix the firm. He vividly remembers the conversation. “I told him ‘Bruno, you obsess about making the most beautiful watch. But the watchmaking industry does not need you to make the most beautiful watch, because this

watch probably has been made. In terms of classical watches, when you see a Patek Philippe Calatrava, you cannot do better. I am sorry, it is not possible. The Calatrava was perfection. Bruno, the point is not to make the most beautiful watch, the point is to make the watch that can only be a Bell & Ross. What is the base of Bell & Ross? Our icon is the instrument panel clock. We must go back to our roots. What are our roots? What is the first page of our catalog for 10 years? The instrument panel clock. Why don’t we go deeper and transform the instrument into a watch?” Rosillo was asking a lot. He wanted, in effect, a design miracle: a new watch that would be an instant icon and magically redefine and reinvigorate the brand.

What was Belamich’s reaction? “He got it right away,” Rosillo says. “He immediately started to design it.”

What he came up with was the BR 01 Instrument.



ROSILLO BEGGED BELAMICH FOR A DESIGN MIRACLE — AN INSTANT ICON THAT WOULD MAGICALLY REDEFINE AND REINVIGORATE THE BRAND.

IV. BUZZ

With the BR 01 Instrument, Bell gave Ross exactly what he asked for: an instrument-panel clock for the wrist. And, just as Ross predicted, it was a game changer for the brand.

The watch has a 46-mm-square case and comes in four versions: three-hand, chronograph, large date, and power reserve. It is powered by ETA movements and has all the elements needed for military applications: screw-down crown; photoluminescent hands, numbers and indices on the dial for night reading; nonreflective sapphire crystal; 100-meter water-resistance and leather or heavy-duty synthetic straps. Prices ranged (and still range) from \$3,000 to \$10,000, with an average price of around \$4,500.

The BR 01 was an instant hit and put Bell & Ross on the map, particularly in the United States. The key, Rosillo says, is its simplicity. “Bruno made it so simple, so basic that I think the design will last. His talent was to make something that is straight to the point, to be able to explain the brand in one product. You don’t need a speech to explain what it is. No story. You see the watch and you understand the whole thing. What the BR 01 did for us was to introduce the brand in a very simple way that explains who we are.”

The company quickly expanded the Instrument line with the BR 02 series of 44-mm, tonneau-cased divers’ watches and the BR 03 series of aviator watches modeled on the BR 01 but smaller (42-mm diameters). It expanded the range with a variety of case metals (titanium, carbon, gold) and dial colors (white, black, orange, blue). It also launched limited-edition, complicated pieces like the BR 01 Tourbillon Classic (\$140,000) and Tourbillon Phantom (\$150,000); and the BR Instrument Grand Tourbillon (\$200,000). The limited-edition, all-black BR 01 Phantom watch of 2006 (500 pieces), with a carbon-finished steel case, has become a collectors’ item.

Says Rosillo, “With the BR Instrument, we re-invented ourselves. We were reborn.” That’s especially true in the U.S., where Rosillo says sales jumped by a factor of 10 in the two years after the BR 01 was launched. (Bell & Ross is privately held and does not disclose sales or production data.) Today, the Instrument collection accounts for 80 percent of Bell & Ross sales in the U.S., according to Stacie Orloff, president of Bell & Ross USA. Rosillo hired Orloff, a respected watch industry veteran, as president of Bell & Ross USA in 2008 as

Bell & Ross watches are produced at the Chanel-owned G. & F. Châtelain factory in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland.



part of a U.S. market push. They launched a major marketing program that has significantly raised the brand’s profile. Two examples: In a 2008 episode of the TV show “Boston Legal” in which William Shatner’s character tries to join the Coast Guard, he wears the BR 01-94 chronograph watch. It was not a product placement; Orloff says the firm had no idea Shatner had the watch.

More indicative of the brand’s new status was a December 2009 article in the Style section of *The New York Times* (“Status Symbols in Lower Key”) with a *Times* photograph of watches from a number of America’s power brands. Nestled among watches from Rolex, TAG Heuer, Cartier, Omega and IWC was Bell & Ross’s BR 01-93 GMT. Not bad company for two guys that a French watch bigwig predicted would never make it in the watch biz. ○

Heaven



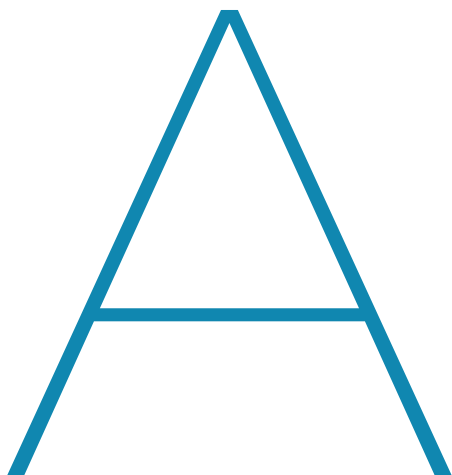
Earth



BY JENS KOCH

PHOTOS BY NIK SCHÖLZEL

Two chronographs with in-house movements — Breitling's pilot-styled Chronomat B01 and IWC's rugged Big Ingenieur Chronograph, designed for earthbound adventure — go head-to-head in a comparison test.



watch with an in-house chronograph movement is something quite special. Even many well-established brands do not offer their own factory-built movement with a stopwatch function. One notable exception is Patek Philippe, which developed one for its collection just four years ago. It's no wonder such movements are so rare: a chronograph is a huge complication whose implementation requires enormous care and attention. The existence of cheaper chronographs is explained by the wide distribution of simpler movements that have been built for decades, like the Valjoux 7750 from ETA.

For the longest time sports-watch brands like IWC and Breitling didn't produce their own chronograph movements, either. But things have recently changed at these two companies: at the 2009 Basel-world watch fair, Breitling introduced its long anticipated in-house movement, the B01, and the first and only watch model to contain this movement, fittingly named the Chronomat B01. IWC presented its Big Ingenieur Chronograph at Geneva's SIHH watch fair in early 2009, with an in-house movement that debuted in 2007 in the company's Da Vinci chronograph.

The Chronomat B01 faithfully follows the Breitling pilot-watch tradition. Its contemporary design includes functional details like a rotating bezel as well as other design elements that are purely decorative. An extreme attention to detail is evident on the dial, whose central element is a square with its edges defined by the center points of the three subdials. The ridged

SPECS

BREITLING CHRONOMAT B01

Manufacturer: Breitling Chronometrie, Allée du Laser 10, CH-2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland

Reference number: AB0110-1022

Functions: Hours, minutes, seconds; date; chronograph with seconds, 30-minute and 12-hour counters; unidirectional rotating bezel

Movement: Caliber B01, automatic; 28,800 vph; 47 jewels; Kif shock absorption, Glucydur balance; oscillating system with regulator and eccentric screw; diameter = 30 mm; height = 7.2 mm; 70-hour power reserve

Case: Stainless steel, double-sided non-reflective crystal, fully threaded stainless-steel caseback, screw-down pushers and crown, water-resistant to 500 meters

Strap and clasp: Natural rubber strap with two-button, stainless-steel safety folding clasp

Rate results: (deviation in seconds per day, without/with chronograph switched on)

Dial up	0	+1
Dial down	+4	-3
Crown up	-1	-6
Crown down	0	-1
Crown left	-1	-6
Crown right	-1	-4
Greatest deviation:	5	7
Average deviation:	+0.2	-3.2
Average amplitude:		
Flat positions	309°	295°
Hanging positions	283°	255°

Dimensions: Diameter = 43.5 mm, height = 16 mm, weight = 175 g

Variations: On stainless-steel bracelet (\$7,690), steel case with rose-gold bezel (\$8,910), rose gold on bracelet (\$38,525)

Price: \$6,800



The Breitling B01, with column wheel and vertical clutch, and IWC Caliber 89360, with column wheel and rocking pinion



SPECS

IWC BIG INGENIEUR CHRONOGRAPH

Manufacturer: IWC Schaffhausen, Baumgartenstrasse 15, CH-8201 Schaffhausen, Switzerland

Reference number: IWC378401

Functions: Hours, minutes, seconds; date; flyback chronograph with seconds, 60-minute and 12-hour counters

Movement: Caliber 89360, automatic; 28,800 vph; 40 jewels; Incabloc shock absorption; Glucydur balance; fine regulation with balance screws; diameter = 30 mm; height = 7.5 mm; 68-hour power reserve

Case: Stainless steel, double-sided non-reflective crystal, fully-threaded case-back, screw-down crown, water-resistant to 120 meters

Bracelet and clasp: Stainless steel bracelet with single-button, stainless-steel safety folding clasp

Rate results: (deviation in seconds per day, without/with chronograph switched on)

Dial up	+2	+1
Dial down	0	0
Crown up	0	-1
Crown down	+3	+3
Crown left	0	0
Crown right	+3	-1
Greatest deviation:	3	4
Average deviation	+1.3	+0.3
Average amplitude:		
Flat positions	286°	257°
Hanging positions	254°	226°

Dimensions: Diameter = 45.5 mm, height = 15 mm, weight 216 g

Variations: With crocodile strap (\$13,500), rose gold (\$25,700)

Price: \$15,040

Breitling Chronomat B01 vs. IWC Big Ingenieur Chrono

patterns in the subdials change according to which half falls within this square area: outside the square, the pattern is radiating circles; inside, it is vertical ridges. The hour-counter subdial at 6 o'clock is divided into quarters. The hands on the subdials incorporate the square shape, and the quarter-hour markers on the bezel are also square. Even the angular typography of the numerals on the subdials and bezel (with its square "zero") reinforce this bold style. The three different numeral fonts add interest, but in this case, more restraint would have made a stronger overall statement, and the font style of the numerals on the bezel takes some getting used to. Generally speaking, though, we liked the design of the Chronomat B01 very much.

THE IWC WATCH makes an even sturdier overall impression due to its larger diameter. All the numerals are executed in the same type found on other Ingenieur models. The standout features of the Big Ingenieur Chronograph's dial are the subdials located at the top and bottom, with a silver ridged structure that sets them off from the rest of the black main dial. A geometric pattern fills the inner section of the dial. Luminous coating is applied deep within the grooves of the silver-colored markers, whose shape reflects the elongated hour and minute hands. The Ingenieur case has rectangular pushers that are neatly integrated with the crown guard and bezel.

The Big Ingenieur is only available with a single dial type and in two case materials (steel or rose gold). The Chronomat B01 is available with a wide range of different dials, with markers or Roman numerals, in steel or gold (or various combinations), and with a number of different straps and bracelets.

The time and date are easy to read on the black dial of the Breitling watch. However, it's a bit difficult to read the elapsed minutes and hours on the small subdials with their silver hands. The IWC chalks up double the points in this category. First of all, and rather surprisingly, here the silver hands provide terrific contrast with the silver subdials. Also, the elapsed minutes and hours are cleverly

**Pros**

- + Striking design
- + Superb clasp
- + Reasonable price
- + Good rate results

Cons

- No exhibition caseback
- Stiff chronograph-start pusher



Pros

- + Excellent legibility
- + Exquisitely finished case
- + Excellent rate results

Cons

- Slow date change
- High price

Round or straight: smooth curves on the Breitling, sharper edges on the IWC — even on the pushers and crystal

Breitling Chronomat B01 vs. IWC Big Ingenieur Chrono

IWC's 89360 caliber features a double-pawl winding system, free-sprung balance and shock-protection rotor bridge.



SCORES

IWC BIG INGENIEUR CHRONOGRAPH

Strap and clasp (max. 10 points): The beautiful bracelet needs no screwdriver for adjusting and the flat clasp is nicely finished, though the hinges feel flimsy. **9**

Operation (5): Easy-to-use pushers, hack mechanism, quick date adjustment and a large crown make operation simple. **5**

Case (10): Solid, machined case with very good finish and attractive details **9**

Design (15): An attractive watch with an industrial look; its huge size makes it somewhat awkward on a smaller wrist. **13**

Legibility (5): The size aids in its legibility. The single subdial for elapsed minutes and hours functions well. **5**

Wearing comfort (10): The Ingenieur is large and top-heavy due to the placement of the lugs, but doesn't press uncomfortably on the wrist. **7**

Movement (20): The flyback function, free-sprung balance and shock-protection rotor bridge are attractive features. The rather simple rocking pinion is not a drawback. **18**

Rate results (10): Beat errors and deviation remain very low in every position and remain stable even when the chronograph is on. **10**

Overall value (15): Compared with the Breitling (which costs half as much), its price is very high. However, it does have a high-quality metal bracelet and its rate results are superior. **10**

TOTAL: **86 POINTS**

combined on the top subdial with easy-to-read 12-hour and 60-minute divisions, as in a second-time-zone display. The effect is more striking over longer timed periods than shorter ones, and numerals on the hour track would have been helpful. But the sheer size of the dial aids in legibility.

The other side of the coin? The Big Ingenieur's 45.5-mm case needs the width of a large wrist as a counterbalance. The watch overwhelms a normal wrist and doesn't fit snugly. On a steel bracelet, it feels top-heavy and so must be worn tightly to keep it from sliding around. In contrast, the Chronomat B01 does not appear overly large despite its diameter of 43.5 mm, and it's also more comfortable to wear. It lies snugly against the wrist, thanks in part to the supple rubber strap and adjustable strap extension integrated into the clasp. The Breitling clasp has a two-button deployment system that is attractive, easy to use and nicely finished. The rubber strap appears quite plain in comparison; luckily, the Chronomat also comes with a crocodile or calfskin strap or a metal bracelet.

The Big Ingenieur Chronograph is also available with a crocodile strap or a stainless-steel bracelet. The bracelet can be adjusted without a screwdriver, and the single-button deployant clasp is surprisingly flat. However, the two hinged parts of the clasp are made of thin metal and shouldn't be subjected to excess pressure when open. Both bracelet and clasp boast superb finishing; the bracelet's carefully beveled and polished edges highlight the line finish on all other surfaces, perfectly matching the extraordinarily fine finishing on the watch case.

THE BIG INGENIEUR'S TWO large pushers are easy to use. The screw-down crown is also large enough to easily grasp and turn. The hack mechanism and quick date adjustment simplify the accurate setting of the time and date.

Breitling's watch also includes both of these useful features. In contrast to the Valjoux 7750, these two *manufacture* movements allow the date to be changed right before 12 o'clock without running the risk of damaging the movement. The fluted crown on the Chronomat is easy to

grasp and turn, and the pushers are also screwed. Although this makes using the chronograph function somewhat more awkward, it does provide greater protection for the pushers and increases the water-resistance of the watch to 500 meters. Unfortunately, you'll have to press the button rather firmly to start the chronograph, due to the design of the chronograph levers. The Chronomat's unidirectional rotating bezel has 240 ratchets and turns smoothly but should be easier to grasp.

Interestingly, the dimensions of the two movements vary only slightly. Each has an impressively long power reserve of more than three days. Plus, both movements are equipped with a bidirectional winding system and have an elegant column-wheel mechanism. But if you examine the movements (and you'll have to remove the caseback from the Breitling to do this) the differences are immediately clear. While IWC uses the same automatic shock-protection rotor bridge as in its Ingenieur movement 80111, the Breitling appears somewhat more conventional. Breitling wins points with a patented self-centering system for the zero position re-setting hammers, a calendar with an instantly advancing date, and especially for the modern vertical clutch that prevents the chronograph seconds hand from jumping when it starts.

Breitling added a shock-absorbing escape wheel to make the watch more resistant to impacts. Another bonus: the movement includes an index-assembly that allows the wearer to quickly and easily adjust the watch's rate to his or her preferred speed. Breitling also produces its mainplates and bridges in-house, and sets its own jewels as well.

For the 89360 caliber, IWC developed a new double-pawl winding system based on its standard Pellaton winding system. With two double-pawl winders, it doubles the number of pawls that push and pull to wind the mainspring. They are no longer controlled with a cam but by a crank similar to the type used in automobiles. The pawls are arranged to apply winding torque even at the slightest motion of the rotor. This winding system is said to be 30 percent more efficient than its predecessor, making it possible to reduce the weight of



SCORES

BREITLING B01 CHRONOGRAPH

Strap and clasp (max. 10 points): The attractive folding clasp with double-button deployment is well designed and easy to use. **9**

Operation (5): Easy operation — with a fluted crown and rotating bezel, hack mechanism and quick date adjustment — is somewhat dampened by the stiff start button and awkward screw-down feature. **4**

Case (10): Rounded and carefully finished flanks, high water-resistance, screw-down pushers, rotating bezel and excellent finishing **9**

Design (15): The Chronomat is an immediately recognizable, contemporary Breitling pilots' watch, designed with several tracks and subdials. **13**

Legibility (5): Easy-to-read time and date, but less contrast on the chronograph counters **4**

Wearing comfort (10): The supple rubber strap ensures that the watch lies snugly against the arm without pressing or rubbing. The quick-adjusting feature in the clasp always ensures the correct length. **10**

Movement (20): The B01 caliber — with column wheel, vertical clutch, instantaneous jumping date and extended power reserve — is technically state-of-the-art and is nicely decorated as well. **18**

Rate results (10): The measured rates meet COSC requirements: low deviations between the various positions and an average rate of +0.2 seconds per day. **8**

Overall value (15): Good price for a chronograph with an in-house movement and a luxuriously designed case in the classic Breitling pilots'-watch style. **14**

TOTAL: 89 POINTS

Breitling's B01 movement includes a heart cam for the totalizers, a vertical clutch and a column wheel.



The clasps on both watches are well finished, but the Breitling's is sturdier.

the rotor and thereby reduce wear. The movement features a free-sprung oscillating system, a sign of high quality. Plus, the flyback function in the Big Ingenieur Chronograph (not featured in the name of the model, as is usually the case) requires a great deal of time and effort in the design stage. The minute counter does not jump, but advances slowly. Unfortunately, the date disk moves slowly, too, and begins visibly advancing at 11 o'clock.

The two movements are similar in their degree of decoration, with various finishes, perlage on the mainplate and polished screw heads. The cutouts on the IWC rotor provide a nice view of the movement, but few edges show beveling or polishing.

Like the Valjoux 7750, IWC's movement uses a rocking pinion for its chronograph clutch. This solution was developed in order to simplify the chronograph but has proven to be essential. The axis of the pinion is moved only on one side and causes the wheels to engage. IWC has created a special shape for the 240 teeth on the chrono-runner in order to minimize jumping of the chronograph seconds hand.

Both watches contain stamped and polished levers, which remind us of those on the Valjoux 7750. Machined levers would have been better choices. Both movements therefore show a mixed bag of features, combining high-quality components with parts one usually finds in lower-grade movements.

THIS COMBINATION OF different grade components has no negative effect on the rate results at all. Both watches have highly accurate rate results, which one would certainly expect from Breitling with its chronometer certification. The B01, like every Breitling movement, is submitted to COSC, the Swiss regulating authority that issues the certificates, which subjects each movement to 15 days of rigorous testing, and each one must conform to the agency's strict standards. In our test watch the B01 caliber met these standards, with a beat error of no more than five seconds per day between each position and an average deviation of only +0.2 seconds. IWC Caliber 89360 kept up the pace, with an average deviation of +1.3 seconds with the greatest difference only three seconds. Plus, the IWC shows almost these same results when the chronograph is running.

Even though the watches run neck and neck in nearly all respects, there is a huge disparity in their prices: \$6,800 for the Chronomat B01 compared to \$15,040 for the Big Ingenieur Chronograph. Even when both watches are equipped with a similar strap or bracelet, the IWC still costs more than twice as much as the Breitling. Prospective buyers for whom price is not an issue can decide solely in favor of the design that best suits their personal style. ○



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BACK IS BEAUTIFUL



Six watches with eye-catching exhibition casebacks strut their stuff in this fourth installment of WatchTime's horological photo gallery.

CARL F. BUCHERER Patravi Evotec DayDate

Reference Number: 00.10625.13.33.01

Movement: CFB A1001, automatic; large date and day display; diameter = 32 mm; height = 6.3 mm; 21,600 vph; 33 jewels, 55-hour power reserve

Case: Stainless steel with rubber-coated bezel; diameter = 44 x 44.5 mm; height = 14 mm; curved sapphire crystal with nonreflective coating on both sides; screw-down crown; sapphire caseback held in place by eight screws, water-resistant to 50 meters

Strap and clasp: Calfskin leather strap with stainless-steel folding clasp

Variations: Rose gold (\$37,500)

Price: \$15,500



MAURICE LACROIX Masterpiece Le Chronographe Squelette

Reference Number: MP7128-SS001-000

Movement: *Manufacture* caliber ML 106-7, manual-wind; diameter = 36.6 mm, height = 6.9 mm; 18,000 vph; 22 jewels; 42-hour power reserve

Case: Stainless steel; diameter = 45 mm; height = 15.9 mm; curved sapphire crystal with nonreflective coating on both sides; screwed crown, fully threaded caseback with sapphire viewing window, water-resistant to 100 meters

Strap and clasp: Crocodile leather strap with stainless-steel folding clasp

Limited edition of 250 pieces

Price: \$20,000



OMEGA De Ville Hour Vision Annual Calendar

Reference Number: 431.33.41.22.06.00

Movement: Manufacture caliber 8601, based on 8500, automatic; chronometer; annual calendar; diameter = 29 mm; height = 7 mm; 25,200 vph; 39 jewels; 55-hour power reserve

Case: Stainless steel; diameter = 41 mm; height = 14 mm; curved sapphire crystal with non-reflective coating on both sides; sapphire caseback held in place by four screws; water-resistant to 100 meters

Strap and clasp: Alligator leather strap with stainless-steel safety folding clasp

Variations: Silver dial; with stainless steel bracelet (\$9,500); rose-gold case with alligator leather strap (\$18,500) or rose-gold bracelet (\$29,000); 160 pieces in white gold with alligator leather strap (\$24,500)

Price: \$8,900





PORSCHE DESIGN Rattrapante P'6920

Reference Number: 6920.69.43.1201

Movement: ETA Valjoux 7750 with module AR2 from Arola, automatic; chronometer, split-seconds chronograph with double-sided winding system and energy optimized rotor; diameter = 30 mm; height = 8 mm; 28,800 vph; 29 jewels; 46-hour power reserve

Case: PVD-coated titanium and rose gold; curved sapphire crystal with nonreflective coating on both sides; screwed crown, sapphire caseback held in place by four screws

Strap and clasp: Rubber strap with safety folding clasp in PVD-coated titanium

Variations: 200 pieces in PVD-coated titanium (\$27,000)

Limited edition of 50 pieces

Price: \$35,000



A. LANGE & SÖHNE Lange Zeitwerk

Reference Number: 140.029

Movement: *Manufacture* caliber L043.1, manual-wind; diameter = 33.6 mm; height = 9.3 mm; 18,000 vph; 66 jewels, including two in screwed gold chatons; 36-hour power reserve

Case: White gold; diameter = 41.9 mm; height = 12.6 mm; curved sapphire crystal with nonreflective coating on both sides; sapphire caseback held in place by eight screws; water-resistant to 30 meters

Strap and clasp: Hand-stitched crocodile leather strap with white-gold pronged buckle

Variations: Rose or yellow gold; platinum (\$75,900)

Price: \$54,500

VICTORINOX SWISS ARMY Alpnach Chrono Power Gauge Limited Edition

Reference Number: 241382

Movement: ETA Valjoux 7750 with Soprod module, automatic; chronograph with power-reserve display; diameter = 30 mm; height = 7.9 mm; 28,800 vph; 25 jewels; 42-hour power reserve

Case: Stainless steel with partial PVD coating; diameter = 43.5 mm; height = 16.4 mm; curved sapphire crystal with nonreflective coating on inside; screwed crown; fully-threaded caseback with sapphire viewing window; water-resistant to 100 meters

Strap and clasp: Hand-stitched calfskin leather bracelet with safety folding clasp in stainless steel

Limited edition of 532 pieces

Price: \$3,495





Craig Payne and son Reid are at home in the sand, at Myrtle Beach, SC, where Craig sports his Panerai PAM183.



Jelena Panic reveals her Roger Dubuis Too Much Love watch while posing with Simon Cowell's wax counterpart at Madame Tussaud's in Las Vegas.

Exploring the Temple of Poseidon in Greece with their son David, Andrew and Cherrie Dy travel in none other than their Rolex Explorer II and Rolex Explorer I watches for him and her.



Three generations of the Ng family reveling in the art of horology (from left to right): Anthony (Ball Trainmaster Pulsemeter COSC), Hannah, Peter (Patek Philippe Annual Calendar) and Patrick (Jaeger-LeCoultre Master Calendar).



While in Rome, Brian Desilets does as the Romans do, wearing his Franck Muller Master Banker while touring the city's ancient streets.



Raymond Tam wears his Breguet Classique while holding his newborn daughter Alexa at the hospital where she was delivered.



When snowshoeing at Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado, Patti Fine's gear includes her Bell & Ross Vintage 123 watch.



Thomas Paul Walters sports his Patek Philippe 5035G at his graduation from Queen Mary, University of London, where he received his Master's degree in Medical Law and Ethics.



Ship attendants aboard the Holland America Line, Marco van Belleghem (left) and Donatus Habets reveal their shared passion for Corum watches. Habets wears a Corum Admiral's Cup Challenge 44; van Belleghem wears the Challenge 44 Regatta.

To submit a photo, please send your image to **photo@watchtime.com** with a short description identifying each person in the photo and the watch each one is wearing. Please give the first and last name of the wearer and the brand and model of the watch. If the photo was taken at an event, please specify when and where it was held. Only clear images in which both the face of the watch and the wearer are visible will be considered for publication. Images must be in JPEG format and no smaller than 1 MB. Only the best-quality and most interesting photos will be considered.

Surveying the damage

Speaking to the press at the SIHH show in Geneva in January, IWC North America CEO Benoit de Clerck noted that in 2009, “we experienced an economic tsunami in America.”

The image was apt. An analysis of Swiss watch export data from the Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry shows the recession’s impact on Swiss watch sales was more devastating in the United States than anywhere else. The extent of the sales slump was breathtaking. Last year Swiss watch exports globally slipped to 2006 levels. Bad enough, but exports to the U.S. fell to the level of 1998! In the last two years, the economic tsunami wiped out nearly one billion Swiss francs’ worth of watch sales to the United States. (The figure reflects ex-factory prices; triple that for retail values.) Swiss watch exports to the United States fell from SF2.44 billion in 2007 to SF1.47 billion in 2009. It’s a staggering sum. The tsunami has altered the watch landscape here, and not just in terms of the sales wipeout. Here’s a quick survey of the damage.

There has been wholesale change in U.S. watch executive suites. Since the collapse of Lehman Brothers in September 2008, at least two dozen watch firms have switched CEOs here. The list includes Cartier, Jaeger-LeCoultre, A. Lange & Söhne, Van Cleef & Arpels, Roger Dubuis, Vacheron Constantin, Girard-Perregaux/JeanRichard, Zenith, Bulgari, Gerald Genta/Daniel Roth, Movado, Ebel, Harry Winston, Hublot, Corum, Bovet, Chronoswiss, Raymond Weil, Maurice Lacroix, Seiko/Pulsar, Festina, Frédérique Constant/Alpina, Technomarine, and Timex. In 33 years covering the watch world, I’ve never seen anything like it. Not all the turnover is the result of the economic crisis; some is the result of companies changing their distribution arrangements here (dropping agents and setting up their own subsidiaries or

vice versa) or normal rotation of foreign executives in U.S. subsidiaries to other posts. But much of the executive sweep is due to the crisis, as company headquarters overseas react to dismal sales numbers here by replacing the top guy or gal. Some executives who were dismissed from one brand have resurfaced at another, but many have not.

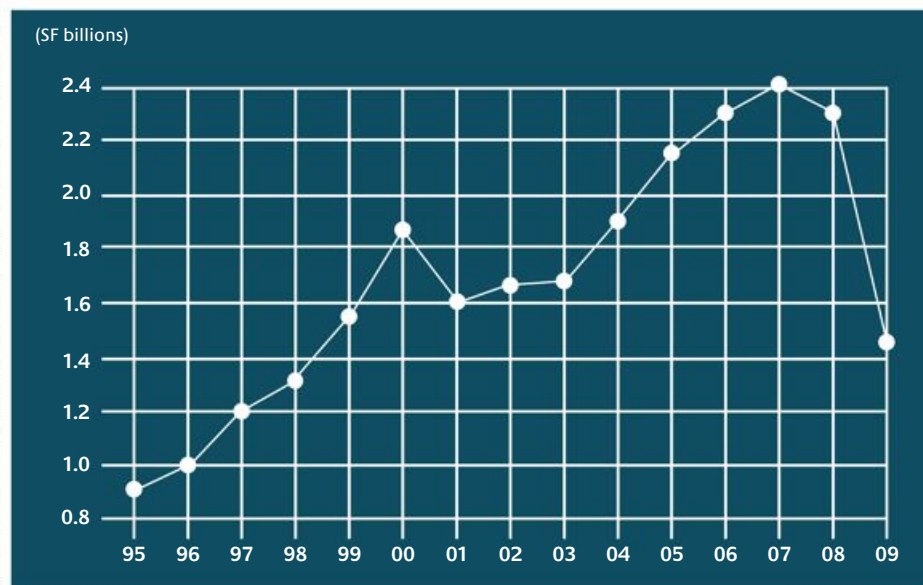
The incredibly shrinking watch market has led to a shakeout in U.S. watch retailers. Fred Levin, CEO of the LGI Network, which tracks U.S. watch retail sales, notes in his report on December 2009, “Relative to last year, a number of large institutional retailers and several thousand small independent store-fronts exited the business.” Bankruptcies and store closings account for most of the attrition. In other cases, retailers have dropped watches from their product mix. Adding to retailer woes is the watch company stampede to downsize retail networks. Cartier is leading the way: it reduced its U.S. wholesale network from 300 doors to 160 in December. Other

firms are trimming, too, if not quite as drastically as Cartier. Chalk it up to the tsunami: fewer watch sales require fewer retail doors, watch execs say.

Oddly, the brand shakeout that was expected from such a brutal economic storm has not happened. Most of the hundreds of brands active in the U.S. market have survived. One that didn’t is Wyler Genève, recently launched here, which has shut down its operations in Geneva. For many small brands, sales have slowed to a trickle or virtually halted. Nevertheless, companies hang on. Indeed, new brands keep on coming (Linde Werdelin and Armin Strom, for example). It’s a testament to the enduring allure of the U.S. market, which for all its troubles remains Switzerland’s second largest market. Brand casualties may still come. While the worst is over, watch executives expect 2010 sales to be flat.

How long until America returns to the glory days of 2007? Eight to 12 years, says the CEO of a Richemont Group brand here. ○

Swiss Watch Exports to the United States



Source: Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry

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